Serfoji Rajah. 1829

THE DISOWNED.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "PELHAM."

"*Corb.*—I disclaim in him!
Avoc. 1st.—*But for what cause?*"
Volpone, Act 4, Scene 5.

2

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

LONDON:
HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1829.

the latter we trust to justice, in the former we bribe the judge. And, in presenting to you these volumes, I know well that Criticism, however austere, is but a corrupt arbiter when tempted by Affection. Of all writings, perhaps a dedication is the dullest: let me in some measure redeem the dullness of this by the sanctity of good wishes. An ancient name, and estates which derive additional importance from the county wherein they are situated—a county in which character obtains from general enlightment an impartial estimate, and merit derives from public opinion the most grateful of all rewards—are an inheritance that, in placing you amidst that great landed aristocracy which exerts over the interests of this country so influential a sway, offers to your ambition a ready opening and a not unelevated career. May it not be long before the hostages you have given us in private life shall be redeemed

in public, and the talents, which are now only ornaments to yourself, be ripened into utility to the world. In that hope how many are included! and in wishing your path to tend to the happiness of others, have I not wished you, not only the noblest, but the shortest road to your own?

In other years, when the work which I inscribe to you may be forgotten by every one else, these lines will preserve it fresh in unabated interest *to you.* Nor will you hereafter judge of me less charitably in the capacity of the man, because in that of the author I have asked you to pardon many errors and much deficiency, for the sake of some affection.

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November 8th, 1828.

INTRODUCTION.

SCENE.—*A dressing-room, splendidly furnished—violet-coloured curtains, chairs and ottomans of the same hue. Two full-length mirrors are placed, one on each side of a table which supports the luxuries of the toilet. Several bottles of perfumes, arranged in a peculiar fashion, stand upon a smaller table of mother of pearl; opposite to them are placed the appurtenances of lavation, richly wrought in frosted silver. A wardrobe of* buhl *is on the left, the doors of which being partly open,*

discover a profusion of clothes, &c.—shoes, of a singularly small size, monopolize the lower shelves. Fronting the wardrobe, a door a-jar gives a slight glimpse of a bath-room. Folding doors in the back-ground.

Enter the author, obsequiously preceded by a French valet, in a white silk jacket, and a cambric apron beautifully brodé.

Author.—So, *Bedos*, it will not be very long, I hope, before your master gives me the pleasure of his company?

Bedos.—(*in French*)—No, *Monsieur*, no—my master will be here immediately. He says you will find two very amusing books on the *toilette*, but that he hopes you will have scarcely time to read their title-pages before he is with you.

Bedos draws an arm-chair near the table, into which the author abstractedly throws himself.

Exit Bedos.

Author.—Yes! I long to vent my anger upon this coxcomb, who, with his usual dexterity, has cast all his faults, moral as well as literary, upon me! Well, *my* time has now arrived! I will assert my individual existence—I will no longer walk about, incorporated with a literary twin—I will give notice of lawful separation, and be henceforth answerable for no sins but my own—(*clock strikes three*).—So late!—I wonder he yet delays; perhaps he is nerving himself to meet the brunt of my just indignation. Humph! what books are these which that thing of silk and cambric spoke of?—(*takes up two books on the toilet-table*)—'Essay on the Human Understanding'—very amusing, indeed! What 's the other?—'Essay on the Human Hair.' Pish!—hark—I hear steps—'tis he!

The folding doors in the back-ground are thrown open, and the voice of one approaching is heard.

"And, *Bedos*, you will see that the great folio and the essence-bottle are not forgotten. And be sure that the poodle's face is washed in milk of roses—'tis shamefully freckled; and send, or rather go yourself, to the man at Astley's, to know if it could not be taught to carry a parasol! And, *Bedos*, order the hock to be sent to Lord Guloseton; and tell Mr. Bubbletome that he *must* get me the Lucian, and that copy of Ricardo, with Mr. M——'s manuscript notes, by nine this evening. And ask Walters what he means by burning wax-candles in the stables? I will countenance no such extravagance: let him lose no time in changing them to spermaceti. And, harkye, *Bedos*, you begin to look fat, you rascal; beware—if you eat a grain of *meat* I discharge you. A valet, Sir, is an ethereal being, and is only to be nourished upon chicken!"

And, uttering these words, enters, through the folding doors, HENRY PELHAM. *His hair,*

naturally curled, and of the darkest chesnut, waves carelessly above a countenance pale, and somewhat long. Grecian features, hazel eyes, a remarkably handsome mouth, small favoris, *where only throughout the whole person* les petits soins *of the toilet are apparent; an expression which, upon the brow, betokens resolution, in the lip and eye, an extreme good nature, mingled with shrewdness; a tall and slight figure, betraying effeminacy only in the hands and feet, which are small to a fault; and an easy, quiet, and aristocratic air, complete the description of the illustrious adventurer. Contrary to the opinion usually formed of him, there is neither in his dress nor his manner any token of singularity or affectation. In the former the superficial observer would rather detect no fault than discover excellence,* (magis extra vitia

quam cum virtutibus); *and it is reserved for the experience of the connoisseur to appreciate the profound study by which alone that very simplicity could have been created.*

Mr. Pelham. — My dear friend, I am delighted to see you—pray pardon my want of punctuality!

The Author.—(*With a severe look*).—I wish, Mr. Pelham, that in your conduct there was nothing else to pardon!

Mr. Pelham.—(*seating himself on an ottoman.*)—What, angry?—is it possible! — ah, how I envy you! You colour—your eyes sparkle!—how very becoming! I wish that I could get into a passion myself now and then. It has been my curse through life to be so confoundedly good tempered!—nothing vexes me! Oh! your philosophical equanimity — your 'sunshine of the breast' is the most terribly dull state of mind one can imagine; besides—a

little excitement is so good for the complexion! I intend, next shooting season, when I shall have plenty of time on my hands, to take some lessons in the art of getting angry. Will you be my master—you seem a tolerable proficient —nay, I'm serious!

Author. (*rebukingly.*) Mr. Pelham!

Mr. Pelham. (*with a soft smile.*)—Well!

Author.—Do oblige me—lay aside an affectation which every body says disgraces you, and endeavour to speak like a man of sense.

Mr. Pelham.—But, my dear Sir, would not that be taking an unfair advantage of *you?*— (*then suddenly changing his manner, and resettling himself on the ottoman, with a resigned air*)—However, proceed; my wishes shall yield to your's: the philosopher of Geneva said rightly, "that there is no virtue without self-sacrifice"—proceed.

Author.—I trust to your practising so sublime a morality. And now, Sir, tell me how

am I to be remunerated for all that you have cost me? What, Sir, can repay me for the provoking and specious charges brought against me upon your account? Did I not—mark me, Mr. Pelham—did I not, when I agreed to embody your confounded adventures, say to myself, 'My hero is a terrible coxcomb—it suits me that he should be so: I have seen something of the various grades of society; the experience has not been acquired without pain—let it not pass without profit: the scenes I have witnessed I will describe; upon the manners I have noted I will comment, *but not in my own person*. The peculiar turn of my individual mind would be very little calculated to execute such a task with success; and scenes on the surface of society, which could only be redeemed from insipidity by an extreme gaiety, would become utterly distasteful, if tinctured in the least by a temperament to which my friends are pleased maliciously to insinuate that gaiety is the last thing congenial.

In the first place, therefore, my hero shall have little in common with his author; in the second, he shall be suited in outward temper to the sparkling varieties of life, though he shall have sufficient latent observation to draw from the follies which he surveys, or even shares, the uses of reflection. His very faults shall afford amusement, and under them he may, without the formality of a preceptor, inculcate instruction: Philosophy, when couched beneath the gay robes of an apparently unconverted Polemon, may find some listeners who would turn in aversion from the austerities of a professed Xenocrates. It is true that I shall have, in the vices and virtues of this hero, no channel for an egotistical embellishment of my own, but on that point I am easily consoled. I have never wished to favour the world with *my* character, its eccentricities, or its secrets; nor should I *ever* be disposed, in the person of *any* hero of romance, to embody,

or delineate myself; yet the world cannot know this, and it has long become a popular vice in criticism to confound and amalgamate the hero with the author. However, this confusion I will carefully avoid—*never once, from the first sentence to the last, shall the author appear.*' Mr. Pelham, did I not adhere inflexibly to this resolution? Did I ever once intrude even in the vestibule of a preface, or the modest and obscure corner of a marginal note?—that I might not, for an instant, be implicated in *your* existence, did I not absolutely forego my own? And what has been my reward—Mr. Pelham, I ask you *what?* Have they not all, with one voice, critics and readers, praisers and impugners, fathered your impertinences and follies upon me? Have they not with one finger pointed at my unfortunate person, as at that of the man who breakfasts in a bath, and eschews the lavatory properties of Windsor soap? And have not I—

I, who in the progress of your adventures was invisible, inaudible—a cipher, a nonentity—have not I, who took such especial pains to avoid the pleasure even of the most minute, or momentary egotism, been set down as the most consummate of all egotists? Answer me that, Mr. Pelham?

Mr. Pelham.—Have you done, my dear Sir? Now, let me slip in a word. That you have been taken for me, it is much easier to assert than to prove—ehem! And those who have once seen you, and dreamt of me, would, I flatter myself, soon be undeceived in so grievous an error. However, if you wish hereafter to avoid a confusion, which you say rightly is a common error in criticism, draw all your heroes without a fault. Not a critical soul of the whole tribe will ever *then* suspect you of copying from yourself. You ask me what is to atone to you for bearing the burthen of my faults.? *Mon Dieu!* is the honour nothing? Consider your

internal satisfaction at being thought to resemble *me!* Besides, my friend, your censurers, like the offspring of Cadmus, employ all their ferocity in destroying each other. There is not a part of my memoirs, which one critic has selected for blame, which another, no doubt, equally judicious, has not especially singled out for praise. That which some declare the most frivolous portion, some also declare the most profound. One praises the gay scenes, and condemns the serious—another lauds the serious, and vituperates the gay. One beseeches you to forsake the tragic, and anticipates bright things from your cultivation of the comic—another recommends you never again to jest as long as you live, but to devote yourself solely to "agitating the passions, and moving the heart." In short, your antagonists are like the tiger and crocodile which attacked the illustrious Munchausen: one leaps into the mouth

of the other: your tiger chokes your crocodile, your crocodile suffocates your tiger—while you, my friend, remain safe and uninjured, to make your bow to the spectators, and receive their congratulations on your escape. Nor is this all: the flattering confusion which identified you with me, was inseparably connected with my existence; and you will suffer me to enumerate to you some of the distinguished compliments which, but for that existence, you would never have enjoyed. To begin then: Did not the essayist of the *London Magazine* conjecture that two persons *must* have written my adventures, and that no single individual could have blended so much wit and vivacity as I possess, (I know not if these are the *exact* words of the critic), with the passion and gravity displayed in certain passages in the third volume, indicative of a less facetious and delightful bias of intellect? Did not another critic

roundly declaim against the stupidity of the public in not discovering that you were also the author of "Vivian Grey," a book which, with all its faults, is, you yourself allow, exceedingly clever? Did not the *Morning Post*, in a charming little anecdote, assert that you were no less a personage than the immortal Ude?—and did not the French journalist affirm, so naturally did you delineate pickpockets, that you could be nothing short of a pickpocket yourself?

Author — (*evidently much softened*). — I must own that these are flattering circumstances, Mr. Pelham, but—

Mr. Pelham.—Flattering—ay, indeed! And do you ask me now what is to atone to you for being supposed guilty of some delicate and graceful embroideries, which are occasionally worked upon the rich velvet of my character? Atone to you!—say, rather, what is to atone to

me for ever being mistaken for ——? Pardon me, Sir, I cannot conclude the sentence!

Author.—Well, well, let us say no more upon the subject, especially as, in the Preface which I have been driven to place before the Second Edition of your memoirs, and which I regret that I omitted in the first, I have already vindicated *you* from the calumniating, and *myself* from the flattering, aspersion; and, besides, it has given me a pride and a pleasure, which do more than compensate for the little mortifications incident to all who write, to find that, by some whose praise is better than fame, my object, in imparting to your adventures so light a tone, has been neither undiscovered nor disapproved. When I was somewhat younger—in mind as well as years—I imagined it a finer thing to be lauded for mental powers than for moral utility. Now my ambition is of a different order; and I would rather be thought of some service to others than

only an illustrious torment to myself. And now, Mr. Pelham, that we have sufficiently discussed your "Adventures," suffer me to solicit your opinion of the new work which I offer to the world.

Mr. Pelham.—Why, really, I don't dislike it. I dare say many people may think it better than your last. Perhaps, however, they may miss me a little now and then; for, such an endearer is absence, that acquaintances, but half-liked when present, become our best friends when gone. At all events, you must prepare the public for a work very dissimilar to your last, and one whose faults and merits (if of the latter it has any), are alike on another scale, and disguised in a different dress.

Author.—Yes; I own frankly that mere amusement, though I have culled it as an ingredient, has not been made so pervadingly the property of these volumes as of those honoured

by your name; and a literary friend of mine, with a very menacing equivoque, has insinuated that, though "The Disowned" may be likely to succeed as well as "Pelham," it will not be with the same class of readers.—*(Here Mr. Pelham smiles significantly.)*—However, I venture to trust that, even for the lighter readers, as well as for those more patient and analizing, any greater gravities of style will be amply atoned for by a far deeper and more novel delineation of character—scenes of more exciting interest and vivid colouring—thoughts less superficially expressed — passions more energetically called forth—and, I *think*, (though I say this with much more diffidence,) if not a greater, at least a more *pervading* and *sensible* moral tendency, than would have been *compatible* with the scheme and design of your Adventures.

Mr. Pelham. (drawling affectedly).—Bravo! —nothing like a modest choice of epithets!—

'deeper delineation,' 'more exciting interest and vivid colouring,' 'thoughts,' 'passions!' Bravo, my friend, I see you begin to imitate me, and abjure self-conceit: believe me, few things are so displeasing as that same conceit—all *my* popularity arises from my bashfulness! But now, as you have asked my opinion, let me give it you as a friend, (the duty of an English friend, you know, is to be as disagreeable as possible:) it is quite the hazard of the die whether your work takes or not. I have paid great attention to the art of popular novel-writing, and will favour you with some hints. *Imprimis*:—A first volume is like the first *début* of a beauty; you must sacrifice every thing to give it *éclat*! In the second volume, and half the third, you may be as dull as you like: you please from the pleasure you have already given; but in the last, your work must (like the beauty still) make every exertion to secure a glittering termination.

to its career, and end, amidst a blaze of literary gems and diamonds, in a fortunate marriage! —I see what you are about to say—your last volume does close with a fortunate marriage. True —but your first, my dear friend, wants show—it is too quiet—not imposing enough—and, *entre nous*, your beauty (to return to our metaphor) is introduced into a very suburban set—gipsies, and brokers, and stock-jobbers—respectable people in their way—but, you will allow, more respectable than interesting. Then, too, the history 'of a vain man,' and that of the ambitious painter, are mere episodes, and episodes are quite gone by—obsolete beyond the elasticity of remembrance. An author, now-a-days, is to mind nothing but his story! You talk, too, of delineations of character: what are these to the story, my dear Sir? Passion—the story! Thought—the story, the story! Moral tendency—the story, the story, the story! The

situation of yourself and reader is exactly like that of a certain tourist to the Lakes and his guide. The tourist inquired diligently who was the best *conducteur*—evinced the greatest anxiety on the subject—would not take an inferior one for the world—chose one at last—set him on the box—and told the coachman to obey his instructions. The guide, in his desire to please so fastidious a gentleman, stops every moment: "Sir, observe this view—see how majestically the lake winds—contemplate that wood—you catch that distant hill!" "Oh, the devil take your interruptions!" cries the traveller; "drive on as fast as you can, and don't wake me till we are safe at the journey's end!" I dare say, my dear friend, that, in conning the criticism of the day, you have observed how much, when reviewing a novel, it is the mode to use the terms of a drama:—'plot, developement, dramatis personæ, catastrophe'—

These are not only the phrases metaphorically applied to you, but, in reality, are significant of the canons by which you are judged. What can be juster? Think, if we had the reviewing of 'Gil Blas' now, what fine work we should make of it: we should soon send Monsieur Le Sage to the Olympic or the Adelphi to study plots, and learn the art of composition! Now, I will give you an admirable recipe for the future, whenever you attempt any thing but a fashionable novel. A fashionable novel (that intellectual libertine of literature), requires *no* rules. It bursts on the admiring world, as did the accomplished Lady Blarney on the bewildered circle of the Vicar of Wakefield, carrying every earthly perfection *in its title*, and bearing in the "*living jingos*" of its phraseology only additional proofs of its superior breeding. My recipe is, therefore, worthless for writings of this order—for all others it is a

specific. Adopt it, and you will be even more sage than your prescriber; for, though Hesiod says that he who counsels wisely for others, is the wisest of men, I perfectly agree with Zeno in believing that he who follows the advice is still wiser. First get your story—prepare it—cut it up into a play in three acts; then spin out the scenes into chapters, and the acts into volumes—in a word, make your novel nothing more than a long melodrame. Have bustle, black ringlets, fighting, moonlight, a waste moor, a ruin, two or three witty fellows in low life, a fascinating villain, who is very pale—no villain has a colour—all dialogue, even if it be, "How do you?" and "Pretty well," firing, if possible, in the last "*act*," and your novel will be declared thrillingly interesting! But no episodes, my friend—no reflections—no metaphysical clock-work of character. What the deuce have these to do with a melodrame?

Author. (*with the air of an author.*)—Well, well;

but surely I have excitement enough, as well as reflection, and plot as well as episode, in that work of which you are pleased to speak so slightingly.

Mr. Pelham.—Slightingly, my friend; by no means. I am not talking about the *merit* of your book, but its chance of popularity. Now, you *must* confess that many of the characters you have introduced have no more to do with your catastrophe than violets with Windsor soap; yet you have taken as much pains with them as if they had—a very absurd waste of time, both to yourself and your reader. You have a very pretty little mystery in its way, but all the characters you introduce ought to have contributed to the solution of the said mystery, and they should all have marched upon the stage in the last "*scene*," as they do in a comedy; because a novel is the delineation of life, *and every one will allow that no striking event, such as*

would terminate a novel, ever happens to him, without all the people he has at any time met in the course of his life, being implicated in it.' That is nature, my dear Sir. Nature, grandeur, and simplicity, as exemplified in the best models.

Author.—Seriously—though I have thought it both convenient and orthodox to use occasionally in my work the very phrases which you have mentioned as employed by the critics—yet I have used them more in accordance with custom than from a conviction of their propriety. It seems to me that a novel may very easily bear too close a resemblance to a dramatic composition; may I venture to add, that I think it should possess the scenic painting—the energy—the animation, but not the *conduct* of a drama. A drama must, necessarily, from its length, be a very condensed picture of human nature—a novel, in three or four volumes, may be a very enlarged one. A

novel, embracing time, character, place, almost *ad libitum*, is the delineation of life in general; a drama is only that of some extraordinary event in it. Unity—an unity which allows little or no wandering from the main design—is both necessary and natural in a play. It is necessary, (among many other and more classical reasons), because the characters are to be individualized, and the story evolved within the limits of a very brief space—it is natural, (among many other and more classical reasons), because, as we have said, the author is not describing life in general, but narrating some single and extraordinary event in it, in which the introduction of matter not immediately relevant to the narration, is obviously impertinent and superfluous. Hence it is, that in a play, *all* the scenes, and *all* the dramatis personæ, should conduce to the developement or the catastrophe. But in a *novel*, not professing to be a mere *tale*, (with which it is often confounded, but from which, I think,

it should be carefully distinguished), the materials for interest are not, I apprehend, to be solely derived from a plot; for, it must be allowed, that a plot, however delightful, is one of the least ordinary occurrences in that human life which a novel is to portray; but also from the more daily things of this motley world—from its common places, as well as its events—from our employments, as well as our passions—from our conversations, as well as our actions—from our humours, as well as our objects. And as, (contrary, Mr. Pelham, to your opinion), every person we meet in life does not exercise an influence over our fate, so, neither, I think, should every character in a novel conduce to the catastrophe. Nor, perhaps, will the main story have a less resemblance to probability, if the reader be led through many scenes, which amuse or interest in themselves, but are not essential to the unfolding of the plot. Plot, indeed, though the first requisite in a drama, I

am tempted to consider, (shall I confess it ?) one of the last in a novel; and only so far of advantage, as it heightens interest or increases attention. If, however, the interest and the attention can be secured by other means, as in the incomparable novels of Hope, Le Sage, Fielding, and Goldsmith—whether by the wit or the spirit of recital—by the admission into character, that show which delights the shallow no less than the wise—by the animation of dialogue—by the spells of language—of thought—of humour, or of passion, so much the greater, in my opinion, is the merit of the author, and so much the juster his conception of the true nature of the novel. I own that I say this disinterestedly, for I myself have not had the temerity to trust, solely, or indeed chiefly, to other sources than the developement of a plot for interest. *Non cuivis adire Corinthum!* that which may be *despised* in the first ranks of authorship may be *essential* to those who aspire

only to the inferior grades. It might sound very wise in Hobbes to thank Heaven "that he had read so few books;" but the same thanksgiving might seem any thing but wise in the mouth of a captain in the Blues! For my part, therefore I have bestowed no little pains on the conception, the progress, and the *dénouement* of my story. Nevertheless, I must frankly confess, that I have not scrupled to wander from the exact line of narration, whenever my excursions seemed likely to obtain a new insight into character, or a new deduction from life. Hence the episodes and the number of characters which you are pleased to condemn in me: and hence, too, a variety of style, as well as of character, which you may possibly condemn too. It seems to me not enough to individualize the persons introduced, but also, in some measure, to modulate the tone of our own description into a harmony, as it were, with the character we describe.

Mr. Pelham.—In short, my dear Sir, you would make a novelist, in the present day, like a justice of peace in a former one, viz., in the words of the old play writer, " Talk of a thousand matters, and all to no purpose." But passing over the episodes, which I do the more easily, first, because the reader may, if he so please, pass them over too; secondly, because they are principally or wholly confined to the first volume, that *premiere jeunesse* of a book which may always go a little astray, let me call your attention to another point. Why did you not give your work a more historical colouring? Thrown as it is into the last century, you might have made it quite a book for an antiquary! Do you not know that every writer who puts his story fifty years back, talks as learnedly and emphatically of " *that day*," " *the customs of that age*," " *the manners of that distant period*," as if he were describing the court of King Canute?

Now this is interesting in the highest degree; it not only throws a vague romance over the incidents of the story, but it makes people think they are improving themselves; for of course all moral improvement is centred in knowing what clothes our grandfathers wore, and what oaths they made use of! Nobody can deny *that!* Why there is little or nothing to distinguish your men of the last century from the men of the present. And were it not for one or two allusions in your dialogues, the introduction of Mr. Boswell and his illustrious friend, and the Duke of Haverfield's accidental use (in a very ducal display of knowledge and wit) of Lavoisier's modern word *oxygen*, which, after all, might, perhaps pardonably enough, be merely a little anachronism, one would not know in what part of the century your people lived and died. How much more accurate, how much more particularizing, how much more instruc-

tive are those authors who tell us at once, "It was on the 1st of April, 1774-5, or 6 (as it best pleaseth them) when the hands of the old Dutch clock, with a black face and red figures, pointed to twenty-one minutes before twelve, that the youthful Anabotomas Micklethwayte mounted his bay gelding; his courser's tail was cut, not as now, in a square, but according to the fashion of those days, in a triangle, and the young cavalier was attired in the following quaint and singular costume," &c. &c. There! *that* shews research and reading! besides, what eloquent colouring it is! I fancy I see Mr. Anabotomas Micklethwayte with his gelding, bay in hue, and triangular in tail, before me at this moment!

Author. Why, jesting apart, the period I have chosen is peculiarly ill adapted for much or prolix delineation of manners; it is not sufficiently remote for the interest of antiquity, nor sufficiently near for that of familiarity. In these

volumes, therefore, contrary to those in which your memoirs are embodied, I have chiefly, though not altogether, (witness my sublime creation of the Copperases, and a few chapters in the second volume) had in view the writers who treat less upon the peculiarities of the manners than upon those of the mind.

Mr. Pelham.—Suffer me, my friend, to tell you a fable, which ends one of the Emperor Julian's letters. "The kite could originally sing like other birds, but was desirous to neigh like a blood horse; not being able to effect the neigh, he lost the song, and his voice became that motley and mellifluous scream which it is at present!"

Author.—Well!

Mr. Pelham—Oh! I leave the application to your discernment; you have abandoned one style—you have aimed at another; beware—but enough of this. I turn, in my capacity of

friend, to select another of your errors for animadversion; this is, indeed, a grievous fault, and alone sufficient to—to— I am seeking for a soft expression, but I mean to say—to—to—

Author.—To damn the book.

Mr. Pelham.—Why, that *was* the signification I wished to convey. The error is this: you have attempted to give the greatest interest in your work—next to that attached to the fortunes of the hero himself—to a virtuous character, in whom you have portrayed few faults and still fewer foibles—an attempt certain of failure; men never forgive those in whom there is nothing to pardon.—[*Here Mr. Pelham stretched his right leg and glanced towards the glass.*]—While, on the contrary, your villain, whom, according to all orthodox rules, you ought to have made the most charming person in the book, is really any thing but prepossessing. This too, in spite of all the shewy qualities

ties usually lavished upon villains—in spite of your having attributed to him gaiety, wit, talent, devotion to the *beau sexe*, moral daring, and even personal beauty.

Author. (*very self-complacently*)—Ay; I rather value myself upon that!

Mr. Pelham.—Do you indeed? Vincent would furnish you with a motto then—

"—— *Valui* pœnas fortis in ipsa meas."

However, a good opinion of oneself is like Bishop Berkley's system, and dispenses with all the rest of the world. You will confess, at least, that if your villain may be pardoned, your virtuous man is perfectly inexcusable?

Author.—Nay, I cannot condemn myself—you are the accuser, I the defendant; let the reader be judge. For my own part, I believe that if we draw equally from nature, in one as in the other, we may render Virtue no less

attractive than glory or love: for I hold with Plato, that "She hath so divine a beauty, that could she be presented *corporeally* to our eyes, she would instantly and for ever engage the adoration of our souls." And how then can I think that where there is so much loveliness in the original, it will be impossible to impart any thing of interest to the copy? One other word upon the character you refer to. It has seemed to me that a literary error of the age is to link with the romantic and sensitive feelings which interest and engage us, a misanthropical and disdainful spirit—as if they were naturally and necessarily allied. With this error in the formation of the character we speak of, I have attempted to contend. I have attributed to Algernon Mordaunt all the feelings usually supposed to belong to the misanthrope. Pride, reserve, unsociability, a temper addicted to solitude as to a pas-

sion; and unable, from its romance, its refinement, and its melancholy, to amalgamate easily with others. To these peculiarities of character (which I beg particularly to state I do not consider ornaments but blemishes) are added the peculiarities of circumstance calculated to deepen them, and to separate still farther the individual from his species by the barriers with which misfortune always loves to surround itself. Yet I have not only painted this man as a warm and universal philanthropist, but I have endeavoured to shew in *his* person, how far, by benevolence, in the widest and noblest interpretation of the word, error itself may be elevated into virtue, and temptation brightened into triumph. And if I have not failed in this attempt, I venture to believe that, from materials of character somewhat hacknied, I have wrought out a character which, in itself, is almost new. For the rest, morals

are a very difficult and debated science—though every writer who has never read one line upon them, nor indeed too many lines upon any thing else, fancies, with a self-delusion almost incredible, that nothing is so easy, both to understand and to teach; it is, therefore, with diffidence and misgiving, that, after a long and intense study of the first principles of this science, I begin to think that I know a single particle about them. But, if a difficult science, morals are at least one in which the several rules and truths are inseparably linked with each other; and a writer cannot write a book which inculcates one just and real moral, without inculcating many. I shall, therefore, leave it to the judicious reader to discover the various aims which this work has been written to promote; but in which, after what I have just said, it would be to the highest degree arrogant, not to entertain great doubt whether I have in

the least succeeded. I only comfort myself with the belief, that he who descends as it were from the usual self-confidence upon which science is examined, may often discover bright things in the Heaven of Truth, which, from a more elevated ascent, a keener eye might be unable to behold; even as from the bottom of a deep pit men may clearly perceive at noon the shining and still stars, invisible to those who are placed upon the eminence or the plain.

Mr. Pelham. (turning aside to conceal an involuntary yawn)—Very fine, all this, my dear friend, I make no doubt; and, indeed, I perfectly agree with you as to the propriety of your attempts, and still more in your diffidence as to their results. But in truth these long evenings, when, while one's faculties are sharpened by the frost, one's spirits are sentimentally dampened by the fogs, one can read a duller book than one could in the heat of the season. If people open

your present work with the firm expectation of finding it like the last, they will be disappointed, and you, perchance, unread; but if prepared by this Introduction, they will resolutely make up their minds to read what does not profess merely to amuse—if they will consent to move along the road of narrative in a sober, quiet pace, and put up with a duller companion now and then, for the sake of a finer view than their journey with me afforded—if, in the course of a varied tour, after idling an hour at the theatre, they will loiter a moment with the lecturer, they will perhaps arrive at the end of their journey with less fatigue than this exordium might seem to indicate; and (to drop the metaphor) by the time your reader finishes your book, which, for your sake, I hope he will do, since the last volume is more exciting and imaginative than all the rest put together, he will be inclined at least to acknowledge, that although, if you had professed to

inculcate nothing by way of instruction, you might have been infinitely more agreeable; yet since you have *resolved* to be a little philosophical and moral, you might very easily, without being a whit more edifying, have been somewhat more dull. But a word with you, my friend—though this work may be received into society somewhat in the highly respectable and honourable light of a private tutor, who does not bore one more than he can help it; yet remember, that like all private tutors, it must be condemned to uniqueness and celibacy; it cannot afford to multiply its image, and, like Hobson's money-bag, be

"The fruitful parent of a hundred more."

On this head, however, I know it will be needless to caution you, nor can any one reasonably imagine that you would give us repetitions of "The Disowned," since you have not thought

fit to copy from a much finer original, and favour the expecting world with repetitions of Henry Pelham.

Author.—If I ever write again, my next book shall be as different from the present, as the present from the last; and if I know aught of myself, it shall combine whatever amusement of a lighter nature your adventures may yield, with whatever interest of a higher order may be found in "The Disowned." And when in either work the reader finds a fault glare a little too strongly in his eyes, let him charitably believe, at least, that it will serve the author as a beacon, should he ever attempt another voyage through the perilous but pleasant seas of fiction.

Mr. Pelham.—Ehem! and now, my friend, having prepared the public for something very different from what, after *my* adventures, they in all probability expected; having told them —(for if we have not yet done it, we will do it

now)—as a prudential and crafty lure—that your first volume is more dull—I beg your pardon, I mean *less attractive* than the second, the second than the third, and the third than the fourth—having, like a true criminal, made your defence before your accusation; and having also, like a dextrous pleader, gently insinuated, with the sagacious Tatler, "that if any part of your production appears dull, they may be sure there is a design in it"—suppose we suffer your readers to proceed at once to the judgment. The world—even the world of novel lovers—is wiser and kinder than we think for; if it can sometimes get what is light, it will not be averse, occasionally, to meet with what is serious; if you appear provident for its tastes at one while, it will yield a little to your's at another. And, after all, and not to flatter it any longer, it is like the horses of the Prince of Conti, and must be satisfied

not so much with what it likes, as with what it can get.

Author.—The horses of the Prince of Conti?

Mr. Pelham.—You have not then heard the anecdote? I will tell it you. The Prince of Conti was embarrassed for want of money—would to Heaven that the want were confined to the Princes of Conti! People refused any longer to trust him. His coachman came to his highness one morning,

"The horses, my lord, want hay and corn!"

"Give them hay and corn, then!" said the prince.

"But, my lord, the farmer and the corn-chandler refuse to supply me any more till their accounts are discharged."

"Ah, that alters the matter!" quoth the prince, very sensibly.

"But, your highness, what shall the horses have?"

"Have!—call my steward."

The steward appears.

"So, the cornchandler and farmer refuse us credit—the rascals—do they?" said the prince.

"Yes, my lord."

"Humph! Who *does* give us credit then?"

"No one, your highness."

"No one!"

"Yes—now I think of it, my lord—the pastry-cook does."

"Honest fellow—we must encourage him!" cries the prince. "Coachman, your affair is settled—*give the horses cheesecakes and custards!*"——My dear Public, you are the horses, this gentleman is the Prince of Conti; and as he cannot give you hay and corn any longer, he has been endeavouring, in this Introduction, to persuade you that cheesecakes and custards are much better food for you!

November, 1828.

NOTE.—The author has occasionally, throughout these volumes, varied the more critical and important *we* by the use of the first person singular. It appears to him that the objections to this want of consistency are more than counterbalanced by a relief, in the general instance, from the monotony of one perpetual phrase, and a greater appearance, in particular places, of force, simplicity, or personal acquaintance, as it were, with the characters or scenes described.

THE DISOWNED.

CHAPTER I.

"I'll tell you a story if you please to attend."
Limbo, by G. KNIGHT.

IT was the evening of a soft, warm day, in the May of 17—. The sun had already set, and the twilight was gathering slowly over the large, still masses of wood which lay on either side of one of those green lanes so peculiar to England. Here and there, the outline of the trees irregularly shrunk back from the road,

leaving broad patches of waste land, covered with fern—that wild offspring of the forest—and the yellow blossoms of the dwarf furze, and, at more distant intervals, thick clusters of rushes, from which came the small hum of gnats—those "evening revellers"—alternately rising and sinking in the customary manner of their unknown sports—till, as the shadows grew darker and darker, their thin and airy shapes were no longer distinguishable, and no solitary token of life or motion broke the voiceless monotony of the surrounding woods.

The first sound which invaded the silence came from the light, quick footsteps of a person, whose youth betrayed itself in its elastic and unmeasured tread, and in the gay, free carol, which broke out by fits and starts upon the gentle stillness of the evening.

There was something rather indicative of

poetical taste than musical science in the selection of this vesper hymn, which always commenced with—

> " 'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good green wood,"

and never proceeded a syllable farther than the end of the second line,

> " When birds are about and singing;"

from the last word of which, after a brief pause, it invariably started forth into joyous " iteration."

Presently a heavier, yet still more rapid step than that of the youth, was heard behind; and, as it overtook the latter, a loud, clear, good-humoured voice gave the salutation of the evening. The tone in which this courtesy was returned, was frank, distinct, and peculiarly harmonious.

"Good evening, my friend. How far is it to W——? I hope I am not out of the direct road?"

"To W——, Sir?" said the man, touching his hat, as he perceived, in spite of the dusk, something in the air and voice of his new acquaintance, which called for a greater degree of respect than he was at first disposed to accord to a pedestrian traveller—"To W——, Sir? why, you will not surely go there to-night: it is more than eight miles distant, and the roads none of the best?"

"Now, a curse on all rogues!" quoth the youth, with a serious sort of vivacity. "Why, the miller, at the foot of the hill, assured me I should be at my journey's end in less than an hour."

"He may have said right, Sir," returned the man, "yet you will not reach W—— in twice that time."

"How do you mean?" said the younger stranger.

"Why, that you may for once force a miller to speak truth in spite of himself, and make a public house, about three miles hence, the end of your day's journey."

"Thank you for the hint," said the youth. "Does the house you speak of lie on the road-side?"

"No, Sir: the lane branches off about two miles hence, and you must then turn to the right; but, *till* then, our way is the same, and if you would not prefer your own company to mine, we can trudge on together."

"With all my heart," rejoined the younger stranger; "and not the less willingly from the brisk pace you walk. I thought I had few equals in pedestrianism; but it should not be for a small wager that I would undertake to keep up with you."

"Perhaps, Sir," said the man, laughing, "I have had in the course of my life a better usage and a longer experience of my heels than you have."

Somewhat startled by a speech of so equivocal a meaning, the youth, for the first time, turned round to examine as well as the increasing darkness would permit, the size and appearance of his companion. He was not, perhaps, too well satisfied with his survey. His fellow pedestrian was about six feet high, and of a correspondent girth of limb and frame, which would have made him fearful odds in any encounter where bodily strength was the best means of conquest. Notwithstanding the mildness of the weather, he was closely buttoned in a rough great coat, which was well calculated to give all due effect to the athletic proportions of the wearer.

There was a pause of some moments.

"This is but a wild, savage sort of scene for

England, Sir, in this day of new fashioned ploughs and farming improvements," said the tall stranger, looking round at the ragged wastes and grim woods which lay steeped in the shade beside and before them.

"True," answered the youth; "and in a few years agricultural innovation will scarcely leave, even in these wastes, a single furze-blossom for the bee, or a tuft of greensward for the grass-hopper; but, however unpleasant the change may be for us foot travellers, we must not repine at what they tell us is so sure a witness of the prosperity of the country."

"*They* tell us! *who* tell us?" exclaimed the stranger, with great vivacity. "Is it the puny and spiritless artisan, or the debased and crippled slave of the counter and the till, or the sallow speculator on morals, who would mete us out our liberty—our happiness—our very feelings, by the yard, and inch, and fraction? No, no,

let *them* follow what the books and precepts of their own wisdom teach them: let them cultivate more highly the lands they have already parcelled out by dykes and fences, and leave, though at scanty intervals, some green patches of unpolluted land for the poor man's beast, and the free man's foot."

"You are an enthusiast on this subject," said the younger traveller, not a little surprised at the tone and words of the last speech; "and if I were not just about to commence the world with a firm persuasion that enthusiasm on any matter is a great obstacle to success, I could be as warm, though not so eloquent, as yourself."

"Ah, Sir," said the stranger, sinking into a more natural and careless tone, "I have a better right than I imagine you can lay a claim to, to repine or even to inveigh against the boundaries which are day by day, and hour by hour encroaching upon what I have learnt to look upon

as my own territory. You were, just before I joined you, singing an old song; I honour you for your taste: and no offence, Sir, but a sort of fellowship in feeling made me take the liberty to accost you. I am no very great scholar in other things; but I owe my present circumstances of life solely to my fondness for those old songs and quaint madrigals. And I believe no person can better apply to himself Will Shakspeare's invitation:—

> " 'Under the green wood tree,
> Who loves to lie with me,
> And tune his merry note
> Unto the sweet bird's throat,
> Come hither, come hither, come hither;
> Here shall he see
> No enemy
> But winter and rough weather.' "

Relieved from his former fear, but with increased curiosity at this quotation, which was half said, half sung, in a tone which seemed to

evince a hearty relish for the sense of the words, the youth replied—

" Truly, I did not expect to meet among the travellers of this wild country, with so well stored a memory. And, indeed, I should have imagined that the only persons to whom your verses could exactly have applied, were those honourable vagrants from the Nile, whom in vulgar language we term gipsies."

" Precisely so, Sir," answered the tall stranger, indifferently ; " precisely so. It is to that antient body that I belong."

" The devil you do!" quoth the youth, in unsophisticated surprise; " the progress of education is, indeed, astonishing !"

" Why," answered the stranger, laughing, " to tell you the truth, Sir, I am a gipsy by inclination, not birth. The illustrious Bamfylde Moore Carew, was not the only example of one

of gentle blood and honourable education, preferring a merry life and an universal home, to a sad one in a rented cabin."

"I congratulate myself," quoth the youth, in a tone that might have been in jest, "upon becoming acquainted with a character at once so respectable and so novel; and to return your quotation in the way of a compliment, I cry out with the most fashionable author of Elizabeth's days—

> "O for a bowl of *fat* Canary,
> Rich Palermo—sparkling Sherry,"

in order to drink to our better acquaintance."

"Thank you, Sir,—thank you," cried the strange gipsy, evidently delighted with the spirit with which his young acquaintance seemed to enter into his character, and his quotation from a class of authors at that time much less known and appreciated than at present; "and if you have seen already enough of the

world, to take up with ale when neither Canary, Palermo, nor Sherry are forthcoming, I will promise, at least, to pledge you in large draughts of that homely beverage. What say you to passing a night with us? our tents are yet more at hand than the public house of which I spoke to you."

The young man hesitated a moment, before he replied—

"I will answer you frankly, my friend, even though I repent my confidence. I have a few guineas about me, which though not a large sum, are *my all.* Now, however antient and honourable your fraternity may be, they labour under a sad confusion, I fear, in their ideas of *meum* and *tuum.*"

"Faith, Sir, I believe you are right; and were you some years older, I think you would not have favoured me with the same disclosure you have done now; but you may be quite

easy on that score. If you were made of gold, the rascals would not break off the corner of your garment as long as you were under my protection. Does this assurance satisfy you?"

"Perfectly," said the youth; "and now how far are we from your encampment? I assure you I am all eagerness to be among a set of which I have witnessed such a specimen."

"Nay, nay," returned the gipsy, "you must not judge of all my brethren by me: I confess that they are but a rough tribe. However, I love them dearly; and am only the more inclined to think them honest to each other, because they are rogues to all the rest of the world."

By this time, our travellers had advanced nearly two miles since they had commenced companionship; and at a turn in the lane, about three hundred yards further on, they caught a glimpse of a distant fire burning brightly

through the dim trees. They quickened their pace, and striking a little out of their path into a common, soon approached two tents, the Arab homes of the vagrant and singular people with whom the gipsy claimed brotherhood and alliance.

CHAPTER II.

> "Here we securely live, and eat
> The cream of meat;
> And keep eternal fires
> By which we sit, and *do divine*."
>
> HERRICK—*Ode to Sir Clipseby Crew*.

AROUND a fire which blazed and crackled beneath the large seething pot, that seemed an emblem of the mystery, and a promise of the good cheer which are the supposed characteristics of the gipsy race, were grouped seven or eight persons, upon whose swarthy and strong countenances the irregular and fitful flame cast a picturesque and not unbecoming glow. All of these, with the exception of an

old crone who was tending the pot, and a little boy who was feeding the fire with sundry fragments of stolen wood, started to their feet upon the entrance of the stranger.

"What ho, my bob cuffins," cried the gipsy guide, "I have brought you a gentry cove, to whom you will shew all possible respect; and hark ye, my maunders, if ye dare beg, borrow, or steal a single croker—ay—but a bawbee of him, I'll—but ye know me." The gipsy stopped abruptly, and turned an eye, in which menace vainly struggled with good humour, upon each of his brethren, as they submissively bowed to him and his *protégé*, and poured forth a profusion of promises, to which their admonitor did not even condescend to listen. He threw off his great coat, doubled it down by the best place near the fire, and made the youth forthwith possess himself of the seat it afforded. He then lifted the cover of the mysterious cauldron.

"Well, Mort," cried he to the old woman, as he bent wistfully down, "what have we here?"

"Two ducks, three chickens, and a rabbit, with some potatoes," growled the old hag, who claimed the usual privilege of her culinary office, to be as ill tempered as she pleased.

"Good!" said the gipsy; "and now, Mim, my cull, go to the other tent, and ask its inhabitants, in my name, to come here and sup; bid them bring *their* cauldron to eke out ours—I'll find the lush."

With these words (which Mim, a short, swarthy member of the gang, with a countenance too astute to be pleasing, instantly started forth to obey) the gipsy stretched himself at full length by the youth's side, and began reminding him, with some jocularity, and at some length, of his promise to drink to their better acquaintance.

Something there was in the scene, the fire,

the cauldron, the intent figure and withered countenance of the old woman, the grouping of the other forms, the rude but not unpicturesque tent, the dark still woods on either side, with the deep and cloudless skies above, as the stars broke forth one by one upon the silent air, which (to use the orthodox phrase of the novelist) would not have been wholly unworthy the bold pencil of Salvator himself.

The youth eyed with that involuntary respect which personal advantages always command, the large, yet symmetrical proportions of his wild companion; nor was the face which belonged to that frame much less deserving than the latter of attention. Though not handsome, it was singular, shrewd, and prepossessing in its expression; the forehead was prominent, the brows overhung the eyes, which were large, dark, and unlike those of the tribe in general, rather calm than brilliant; the complexion, though sun-

burnt, was not swarthy, and the face was carefully and cleanly shaved, so as to give all due advantage of contrast to the brown luxuriant locks which fell, rather in flakes than curls, on either side of his smooth and glowing cheeks. In age, he was about thirty-five, and though his air and mien were assuredly not lofty nor aristocratic, yet they were essentially and strikingly above the bearing of his vagabond companions: those companions were in all respects of the ordinary race of gipsies; the cunning and flashing eye, the raven locks, the dazzling teeth, the bronzed colour, and the low, slight, active form, were as strongly their distinguishing characteristics as the token of all their horde.

But to these, the appearance of the youth presented a striking and beautiful contrast.

He had only just past the stage of boyhood, perhaps he might have seen eighteen summers, probably not so many. He had, in imitation of

his companion, and perhaps from mistaken courtesy to his new society, doffed his hat; and the attitude which he had chosen, fully developed the noble and intellectual turn of his head and throat. His hair, as yet preserved from the disfiguring fashions of the day, was of a deep auburn, which was rapidly becoming of a more chesnut hue, and curled in short close curls from the nape of the neck to the commencement of a forehead singularly white and high. His brows finely and lightly penciled, and his long lashes of the darkest dye, gave a deeper and perhaps softer shade than they otherwise would have worn, to eyes quick and observant in their expression, and of a light hazel in their colour. His cheek was very fair, and the red light of the fire cast an artificial tint of increased glow upon a complexion that had naturally rather bloom than colour; while a dark riding frock set off in their full beauty, the fine

outline of his chest, and the slender symmetry of his frame.

But it was neither his features, nor his form, eminently handsome as they were, which gave the principal charm to the young stranger's appearance—it was the strikingly bold, buoyant, frank, and almost joyous expression, which presided over all. *There* seemed to dwell the first glow and life of youth, undimmed by a single fear, and unbaffled in a single hope. *There* were the elastic spring, the inexhaustible wealth of energies, which defied, in their exulting pride, the heaviness of sorrow and the harassments of time. It was a face, that while it filled you with some melancholy foreboding of the changes and chances which must, in the inevitable course of fate, cloud the openness of the unwrinkled brow, and soberize the fire of the daring and restless eye, instilled also within you some assurance of triumph, and some omen of

success:—a vague but powerful sympathy with the adventurous and cheerful spirit, which appeared literally to speak in its expression. It was a face you might imagine in one born under a prosperous star, and you felt, as you gazed, a confidence in that bright countenance, which, like the shield of the British Prince,* seemed possessed with the power to charm into impotence the evil spirits who menaced its possessor.

"Well, Sir," said his friend, the gipsy, who had in his turn been surveying with admiration the sinewy and agile frame of his young guest, "Well, Sir, how fares your appetite? Old Dame Bingo will be mortally offended if you do not do ample justice to her good cheer."

"If so," answered our traveller, who, young as he was, had learnt already the grand secret of making, in every situation, a female friend,

* Prince Arthur.—See The Fairy Queen.

"if so, I shall be likely to offend her still more."

"And how, my pretty master?" said the old crone, with an iron smile.

"Why, I shall be bold enough to reconcile matters with a kiss, Mrs. Bingo," answered the youth.

"Ha! ha!" shouted the tall gipsy; "it is many a long day since my old Mort slapped a gallant's face for such an affront. But here come our messmates. Good evening, my mumpers—make your bows to this gentleman, who has come to bowse with us to-night. 'Gad, we'll shew him that old ale's none the worse for keeping company with the moon's darlings.—Come, sit down, sit down. Where's the cloth, ye ill-mannered loons, and the knives and platters? Have we no holiday customs for strangers, think ye?—Mim, my cove, off to *my* caravan—bring out the knives, and all other rattletraps;

and harkye, my cuffin, this small key opens the inner hole, where you'll find two barrels; bring one of them. I'll warrant it of the best, for the brewer himself drank some of the same sort but two hours before I *nimm'd* them. Come, Stump, my cull, make yourself wings. Ho, Dame Bingo, is not that pot of thine seething yet?—Ah, my young gentleman, you commence betimes; so much the better; if love's a summer's day, we all know how early a summer morning begins," added the jovial Ægyptian, in a lower voice (feeling perhaps that he was only understood by himself), as he gazed complacently on the youth, who, with that happy facility of making himself everywhere at home, so uncommon to his countrymen, was already paying compliments, suited to their understanding, to two fair daughters of the tribe, who had entered with the new comers. Yet had he too much craft or delicacy, call it which you will, to con-

tinue his addresses to that limit where ridicule or jealousy, from the male part of the assemblage, might commence; on the contrary, he soon turned to the men, and addressed them with a familiarity so frank, and so suited to their taste, that he grew no less rapidly in their favour than he had already done in that of the women, and when the contents of the two cauldrons were at length set upon the coarse, but clean, cloth, which, in honour of his arrival, covered the sod, it was in the midst of a loud and universal peal of laughter, which some broad witticism of the young stranger had produced, that the party sat down to their repast.

Bright were the eyes, and sleek the tresses of the damsel who placed herself by the side of the stranger, and many were the alluring glances and insinuated compliments which replied to his open admiration and profuse flattery; but still was there nothing exclusive in his attentions:

perhaps an ignorance of the customs of his entertainers, and a consequent discreet fear of offending them, restrained him; or perhaps he found ample food for occupation in the plentiful dainties which his host heaped before him.

"Now tell me," said the gipsy chief (for chief he appeared to be), "if we lead not a merrier life than you dreamt of? or would you have us change our coarse fare and our simple tents, our vigorous limbs and free hearts, for the meagre board, the monotonous chamber, the diseased frame, and the toiling, careful, and withered spirit of some miserable mechanic?"

"Change!" cried the youth, with an earnestness, which, if affected, was an exquisite counterfeit—"By Heaven, I would change with you myself."

"Bravo, my fine cove!" cried the host, and all the gang echoed their sympathy with his applause.

The youth continued: "Meat, and that plentiful; ale, and that strong; women, and those pretty ones; what can man desire more?"

"Aye," cried the host, "and all for nothing,—no, not even a tax; who else in this kingdom can say that? Come, Mim, push round the ale."

And the ale *was* pushed round, and if coarse the merriment, loud at least was the laugh that rung ever and anon from the old tent; and though, at moments, something in the guest's eye and lip might have seemed, to a very shrewd observer, a little wandering and *distrait*, yet, upon the whole, he was almost as much at ease as the rest, and if he was not quite as talkative, he was to the full as noisy.

By degrees, as the hour grew later, and the barrel less heavy, the conversation changed into one universal clatter. Some told their feats in beggary; others, their achievements in theft; not a viand they had fed on but had its appro-

priate legend; even the old rabbit, which had been as tough as old rabbit can well be, had not been honestly taken from his burrow; no less a person than Mim himself had purloined it from a widow's footman, who was carrying it to an old maid as a *bon bouche*.

"Silence!" cried the host, who loved talking as well as the rest, and who, for the last ten minutes, had been vainly endeavouring to obtain attention. "Silence! my maunders, it's late, and we shall have the queer cuffins* upon us if we keep it up much longer. What, ho, Mim, are you still gabbling at the foot of the table, when your betters are talking? As sure as my name's King Cole, I'll choke you with your own rabbit skin, if you don't hush your prating cheat—nay, never look so abashed—if you *will* make a noise, come forward, and sing us a gipsy song. You see, my young Sir, (turning to his

* Magistrates.

guest,) that we are not without our pretensions to the fine arts."

At this order, Mim started forth, and taking his station at the right hand of the *soi disant* King Cole, began the following song, the chorus of which was chaunted in full diapason by the whole groupe, with the additional force of emphasis that knives, feet, and fists could bestow.

THE GIPSY'S SONG.

" The king to his hall, and the steed to his stall,
And the cit to his bilking board;
But we are not bound to an acre of ground,
For our home is the houseless sward.

" We sow not, nor toil; yet we glean from the soil
As much as its reapers do;
And wherever we rove, we feed on the cove
Who gibes at the mumping crew.

CHORUS—So the king to his hall, &c.

" We care not a straw for the limbs of the law,
Nor a fig for the *cuffin queer*;
While Hodge and his neighbour shall lavish and labour,
Our tent is as sure of its cheer.

CHORUS—So the king to his hall, &c.

"The worst have an awe of the *harman's** claw,
The best will shun the *trap*;†
But our wealth is as free of the bailiff's *see*,
As our necks of the twisting *crap*.‡

CHORUS—So the king to his hall, &c.

"They say it is sweet to win the meat,
For which one has sorely wrought;
But I never could find that we lack'd the mind
To the food that has cost us nought!

CHORUS.—So the king to his hall, &c.

"And when we have ceas'd from our fearless feast,
Our *jigger*|| will need no bars;
Our watch shall be the owlit's tree,
And our lamps the glorious stars.

CHORUS.

"So the king to his hall, and the steed to his stall,
And the cit to his bilking board;
But we are not bound to an acre of ground,
For our home is the houseless sward."

Rude as was this lawless stave, which I should perhaps apologize for introducing, the spirit with which it was sung atoned to the young stranger for its obscurity and quaintness;

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* Constable. † Bailiff. ‡ Gallows. || Door.

as for his host, that curious personage took a lusty and prominent part in the chorus—nor did the old woods refuse their share of the burthen, but sent back a merry echo to the chief's deep voice, and the harsher notes of his jovial brethren.

When the glee had ceased, King Cole rose, the whole band followed his example, the cloth was cleared in a trice, the barrel—oh! what a falling off was there!—was rolled into a corner of the tent, and the crew, to whom the awning belonged, began to settle themselves to rest; while those who owned the other encampment marched forth, with King Cole at their head. Leaning with no light weight upon his guest's arm, the lover of ancient minstrelsy poured into the youth's ear a train of eulogy, rather eloquent than coherent, upon the scene they had just witnessed.

"What," cried his majesty, in an enthusiastic tone, "what can be so truly regal as our state?

Can any man control us? Are we not above all laws? Are we not the most despotic of kings? Nay, more than the kings of earth—are we not the kings of Fairy-land itself? Do we not realize the golden dreams of the old rhimers—luxurious dogs that they were? Who would not cry out—

"'Blest silent groves! O may ye be
For ever Mirth's best nursery!
May pure Contents
For ever pitch *their tents*
Upon these downs, these meads, these rocks, these mountains.'"

Uttering this notable extract from the thrice honoured Sir Henry Wotton, King Cole turned abruptly from the common, entered the wood which skirted it, and only attended by his guest and his minister, Mim, came suddenly, by an unexpected and picturesque opening in the trees, upon one of those itinerant vehicles termed caravans; he ascended the few steps which led to the entrance, opened the door, and was instantly in the arms of a pretty and young woman. On seeing our hero, (for such we fear the youth is likely to

become,) she drew back with a blush not often found upon regal cheeks.

"Pooh," said King Cole, half tauntingly, half fondly, "pooh, Lucy, blushes are garden flowers, and ought never to be found wild in the woods:" then changing his tone, he said, "Come, put some fresh straw in the corner, this stranger honours our palace to-night. — Mim, unload thyself of our royal treasures—watch without, and vanish from within!"

Depositing on his majesty's floor the appurtenances of the regal supper-table, Mim made his respectful adieus, and disappeared; meanwhile the Queen scattered some fresh straw over a mattrass in the narrow chamber, and laying over all a sheet of singularly snowy hue, made her guest some apology for the badness of his lodging; this King Cole interrupted, by a most elaborately noisy yawn, and a declaration of extreme sleepiness. "Now, Lucy, let us leave

the gentleman to what he will like better than soft words even from a Queen. Good night, Sir, we shall be stirring at day-break;" and with this farewell King Cole took the lady's arm, and retired with her into an inner department of the caravan.

Left to himself, our hero looked round with surprise at the exceeding neatness which reigned over the whole apartment. But what chiefly engrossed the attention of one, to whose early habits they had always been treasures, were several books ranged in comely shelves fenced with wire-work on either side of the fire-place. "Courage," thought he, as he stretched himself on his humble couch, "my adventures have commenced well; a gipsy tent, to be sure, is nothing very new, but a gipsy who quotes poetry, and enjoys a modest wife, speaks better than books do for the improvement of the world."

CHAPTER III.

> "Hath not old custom made this life more sweet
> Than that of painted pomp?"
>
> *As you Like it.*

The sun broke cheerfully through the small lattice of the caravan, as the youth opened his eyes, and saw the good-humoured countenance of his gipsy host bending over him complacently.

"You slept so soundly, Sir, that I did not like to disturb you; but my good wife only waits your rising to have all ready for breakfast."

"It were a thousand pities," cried the guest,

leaping from his bed, "that so pretty a face should look cross on my account, so I will not keep her waiting an instant."

The gipsy smiled, as he answered, "I require no professional help from the devil, Sir, to foretell your fortune."

"No!—and what is it?"

"Honour, reputation, success, all that are ever won by a soft tongue, if it be backed by a bold heart."

Bright and keen was the flash which shot over the countenance of the one, for whom this prediction was made, as he listened to it with a fondness for which his reason rebuked him. He turned aside with a sigh, which did not escape the gipsy, and bathed his face in the water which the provident hand of the good woman had set out for his lavations.

"Well," said his host, when the youth had finished his brief toilet, "suppose we breathe the

fresh air, while Lucy smooths your bed, and prepares the breakfast."

"With all my heart," replied the youth, and they descended the steps which led into the wood. It was a beautiful fresh morning, the air was like a draught from a Spirit's fountain, and filled the heart with new youth, and the blood with a rapturous delight; the leaves—the green, green leaves of spring—were quivering on the trees; among which, the happy birds fluttered and breathed the gladness of their souls in song. While the dew-drops that

"strewed
"A baptism o'er the flowers,"

gave back, in their million mirrors, the reflected smiles of the cloudless and rejoicing sun.

"Nature," said the gipsy, "has given her children a gorgeous present in such a morning."

"True," said the youth; "and you, of us two, perhaps, only deserve it: as for me, when I think

of the long road of dust, heat, and toil that lies before me, I could almost wish to stop here and ask an admission into the gipsy's tents."

"You could not do a wiser thing," said the gipsy, gravely.

"But fate leaves me no choice," continued the youth, as seriously as if he were in earnest; "and I must quit you immediately after I have a second time tasted of your hospitable fare."

"If it must be so," answered the gipsy, "I will see you, at least, a mile or two on your road." The youth thanked him for a promise, which his curiosity made acceptable, and they turned once more to the caravan.

The meal, however come by, met with as much honour as it could possibly have received from the farmer, from whom its materials were borrowed.

It was not without complacency that the worthy pair beheld the notice their guest lavished

upon a fair, curly-headed boy of about three years old, the sole child and idol of the gipsy potentates. But they did not perceive, when the youth rose to depart, that he slipped into the folds of the child's dress, a ring of some value, the only piece of foppery he possessed.

"And now," said he, after having thanked the not uninteresting couple for their hospitality, "I must say good-bye to your flock, and set out upon my day's journey."

Lucy, despite her bashfulness, shook hands with her handsome guest, and the latter, accompanied by the gipsy chief, strolled down to the encampments.

Open and free was his parting farewell to their inmates of the two tents, and liberal was the hand which showered upon all—especially on the damsel who had been his Thais of the evening feast—the silver coins which made no inconsiderable portion of his present property.

It was amidst the oracular wishes and favourable predictions of the whole crew that he recommenced his journey with the gipsy chief.

When the tents were fairly out of sight, and not till then, King Cole broke the silence which had as yet subsisted between them.

" I suppose, my young gentleman, that you expect to meet some of your friends or relations at W——. I know not what they will say when they hear where you have spent the night."

" Indeed !" said the youth ; " whoever hears my adventure, relation or not, will be delighted with my description ; but, in sober earnest, I expect to find no one at W——, more, my friend, than a surly innkeeper, unless it be his dog."

" Why, they surely do not suffer a stripling of your youth, and evident quality, to wander alone !" cried King Cole, in undisguised surprise.

The young traveller made no prompt answer, but bent down as if to pluck a wild flower

which grew by the road side: after a pause, he said—

"Nay, Master Cole, you must not set me the example of playing the inquisitor; or you cannot guess how troublesome I shall be. To tell you the truth, I am dying with curiosity, to know something more about you than you may be disposed to tell me: you have already confessed that, however boon companions your gipsies may be, they are not those with whom you were born and bred."

King Cole laughed; perhaps he was not ill pleased at the curiosity of his guest, nor at the opportunity it afforded him of being his own hero.

"My story, Sir," said he, "would be soon told, if you thought it worth the hearing, nor does it contain anything which should prevent my telling it."

"If so," quoth the youth, "I shall conceive

your satisfying my request the greatest favour you have yet bestowed upon me."

The gipsy relaxed his pace into an indolent saunter, as he commenced.

"The first scene that I remember, was similar to that which you witnessed last night. The savage tent, and the green moor—the faggot blaze—the eternal pot, with its hissing note of preparation—the old dame who tended it, and the ragged urchins who learnt from its contents the first reward of, and the earliest temptation to theft—all these are blended into agreeable confusion as the primal impressions of my childhood. The woman who nurtured me as my mother was rather capricious than kind, and my infancy passed away, like that of more favoured scions of fortune, in alternate chastisement and caresses. In good truth, Kinching Meg had the shrillest voice and the heaviest hand of the whole crew, and I cannot complain of injustice,

since she treated me no worse than the rest. Notwithstanding the irregularity of my education, I grew up strong and healthy, and my reputed mother had taught me so much fear for herself, that she left me none for any thing else; accordingly, I became bold, reckless, and adventurous, and at the age of thirteen was as thorough a reprobate as the tribe could desire. At that time a singular change befell me: we (that is, my mother and myself) were begging, not many miles from hence, at the door of a rich man's house, in which the mistress lay on her death-bed. That mistress was my *real* mother, from whom Meg had stolen me in my first year of existence. Whether it was through the fear of conscience, or the hope of reward, no sooner had Meg learnt the dangerous state of my poor mother, the constant grief which they said had been the sole, though slow cause of her disease, and the large sums which had been repeatedly

offered for my recovery; no sooner, I say, did Meg ascertain all these particulars, than she fought her way up to the sick chamber, fell on her knees before the bed, owned her crime, and produced myself. Various little proofs of time, place, circumstance; the clothing I had worn when stolen, and which was still preserved, joined to the striking likeness I bore to both my parents, especially to my father, silenced all doubt and incredulity; I was welcomed home with a joy which it is in vain to describe; my return seemed to recall my mother from the grave; she lingered on for many months longer than her physicians thought it possible, and when she died, her last words commended me to my father's protection.

"My surviving parent needed no such request. He lavished upon me all that superfluity of fondness and food, of which those good people who are resolved to spoil their children,

are so prodigal. He could not bear the idea of sending me to school; accordingly he took a tutor for me, a simple-hearted, gentle, kind man, who possessed a vast store of learning rather curious than useful. He was a tolerable, and at least an enthusiastic, antiquarian —a more than tolerable poetaster; and he had a prodigious budget full of old ballads and songs which *he* loved better to teach and *I* to learn, than all the "Latin, Greek, geography, astronomy, and the use of the globes," which my poor father had so sedulously bargained for.

"Accordingly I became exceedingly well-informed in all the "precious conceits" and "golden garlands" of our British antients, and continued exceedingly ignorant of every thing else, save and except a few of the most fashionable novels of the Fielding and Smollett school, and the contents of six lying volumes of voyages and travels which flattered both my appetite for

the wonderful, and my love of the adventurous. My studies, such as they were, were not by any means suited to curb or direct the vagrant tastes my childhood had acquired: on the contrary, the old poets, with their luxurious description of the "green wood," and the forest life; the fashionable novelists, with their spirited accounts of the wanderings of some fortunate rogue, and the ingenious travellers, with their wild fables so dear to the imagination of every boy, only fomented within me a strong though secret regret at my change of life, and a restless disgust to the tame home and bounded roamings to which I was condemned. When I was about seventeen, my father sold his property which he had become possessed of in right of my mother, and transformed the purchase money to the security of the funds. Shortly afterwards he died; the bulk of his fortune became mine; the remainder was settled upon a sister many years older than a

myself, who, in consequence of her marriage and residence in a remote part of Wales, I had never yet seen.

"Now, then, I was perfectly free and unfettered; my guardian lived in Scotland, and left me entirely to the guidance of my tutor, who was both too simple and too indolent to resist my inclinations. I went to London, became acquainted with a set of most royal scamps, frequented the theatres, the taverns, the various resorts which constitute the gaieties of a blood just above the middle class, and was one of the noisiest and wildest "blades" that ever heard "the chimes by midnight," and the magistrate's lecture for matins. I was a sort of leader among the jolly dogs I consorted with. My earlier education gave a raciness and nature to my delineations of "life," which delighted them. But somehow or other I grew wearied of this sort of existence. About a

year after I was of age my fortune was more than three parts spent; I fell ill with drinking, and grew dull with remorse; need I add that my comrades left me to myself. A fit of the spleen, especially if accompanied with duns, makes one wofully misanthropic; so when I recovered from my illness, I set out on a tour through Great Britain and France—alone, and principally on foot. Oh, the rapture of shaking off the half friends and cold formalities of society, and finding oneself all unfettered, with no companion but nature, no guide but youth, and no flatterer but hope!

"Well, my young friend; I travelled for two years, and saw even in that short time, enough of this busy world to weary and disgust me with its ordinary customs. I was not made to be polite, still less to be ambitious. I sighed after the coarse comrades and the free tents of my first associates, and a thousand remembrances

of the gipsy wanderings, steeped in all the green and exhilarating colours of childhood, perpetually haunted my mind. On my return from my wanderings, I found a letter from my sister, who, having become a widow, had left Wales, and had now fixed her residence in a well visited watering place in the west of England. I had never yet seen her, and her letter was a fine lady-like sort of epistle, with a great deal of romance and a very little sense, written in an extremely pretty hand, and ending with a quotation from Pope. (I never could endure Pope, nor indeed any of the poets of the days of Anne and her successors.) It was a beautiful season of the year; I had been inured to pedestrian excursions, so I set off on foot to see my nearest surviving relative. On the way, I fell in (though on a very different spot) with the very encampment you saw last night. By Heavens, that was a merry meeting to me; I

joined, and journeyed with them for several days—never do I remember a happier time. Then, after many years of bondage and stiffness, and accordance with the world, I found myself at ease, like a released bird: with what zest did I join in the rude jokes and the knavish tricks, the stolen feasts and the roofless nights of those careless vagabonds. Ah, Sir, may you never—for the sake of what the world calls honest men—know the happiness of being a rogue!

"I left my fellow-travellers at the entrance of the town, where my sister lived. Now came the contrast. Somewhat hot, rather *plebeianishly* clad, and covered with the dust of a long summer's day, I was ushered into a little drawing-room, eighteen feet by twelve, as I was afterwards somewhat pompously informed. A flaunting carpet, green, red, and yellow, covered the floor. A full length picture of a thin woman,

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looking most agreeably ill-tempered, stared down at me from the chimney-piece; three stuffed birds—how emblematic of domestic life—stood stiff and imprisoned, even after death, in a glass cage. A fire-screen, and a bright fire-place; chairs covered with holland, to preserve them from the atmosphere, and long mirrors wrapped, as to the frame work, in yellow muslin, to keep off the flies, finish the panorama of this watering-place mansion. The door opened—silks rustled—voice shrieked, 'My Brother!' and a figure—a thin figure—the original of the picture over the chimney-piece—rushed in."

"I can well fancy her joy," said the youth.

"You can do no such thing, begging your pardon, Sir," resumed King Cole. "She had no joy at all:—she was exceedingly surprised and disappointed. In spite of my early adventure, I had nothing picturesque or romantic

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

about me at all. I was very thirsty, and I called for beer; I was very tired, and I laid down on the sofa; I wore thick shoes and small buckles; and my clothes were made, God knows where, and were certainly put on, God knows how. My sister was miserably ashamed of me: she had not even the manners to disguise it. In a higher rank of life than that which she held, she would have suffered far less mortification; for I fancy great people pay but little *real* attention to externals. Even if a man of rank is vulgar, it makes no difference in the orbit in which he moves; but your 'genteel gentlewomen' are so terribly dependent upon what Mrs. Tomkyns will say—so very uneasy about their relations, and the opinion they are held in—and above all, so made up of appearances and clothes—so undone, if they do not eat, drink, and talk *a-la-mode*, that I can fancy no shame like that of

my poor sister's, at having found, and *being found with*, a vulgar brother.

"I saw how unwelcome I was, and I did not punish myself by a long visit. With a proud face, but a heart full of bitter and crushed affections, I left her house, and returned towards London. On my road, I again met with my gipsy friends; the warmth of their welcome enchanted me—you may guess the rest. I stayed with them so long, that I could not bear to leave them; I re-entered their crew. I am one among them, not that I have become altogether and solely of the tribe. I still leave them, whenever the whim seizes me, and repair to the great cities and thoroughfares of man. There I am soon driven back again, to my favourite and fresh fields, even as a reed upon a wild stream is dashed back upon the green rushes from which it has been torn. You perceive that I have many comforts and distinctions

above the rest; for, alas, Sir, there is no society, however free and democratic, where wealth will not create an aristocracy; the remnants of my fortune provide me with my unostentatious equipage, and the few luxuries it contains; it relieves the necessities of the poor, whether of mine or another tribe, among which my vagrancies cast me; it allows me to curb among the crew, all the grosser and heavier offences against the law, to which want might compel them; and it serves to keep up that sway and ascendancy among them, which my superior education and fluent spirits enabled me at first to attain. Though not *legally* their king, I assume that title over the few encampments with which I am accustomed to travel, and you perceive that I have given my simple name, both the jocular and kingly dignity of which the old song will often remind you. My story is done."

"Not quite," said his companion: "your wife? How came you by that blessing?"

"Ah! thereby hangs a pretty and a lovesick tale, which would not sound ill in an ancient ballad; but I will content myself with briefly sketching it. Lucy is the daughter of a gentleman farmer: about four years ago I fell in love with her. I wooed her clandestinely, and at last I owned I was a gipsy; I did not add my birth nor fortune—no, I was full of the romance of the Nut-brown Maid's lover, and attempted a trial of woman's affection, which even in these days was not disappointed. She eloped with me—I leave you to imagine her father's anger—but you must also imagine my revenge for his noisy hatred and active persecution of me. A year after our marriage, things went bad with him; corn, crops, cattle—the deuce was in them all! an execution was on his house and a writ out against his person. I sent

Lucy to comfort and restore him; we procured him a better farm and a prettier house, and we are now the best friends in the world. Poor Lucy is perfectly reconciled to her caravan, and her wandering husband, and has never, I believe, once repented the day on which she became the gipsy's wife!"

"I thank you heartily for your history," said the youth, who had listened very attentively to this detail; "and though my happiness and pursuits are centred in that world which you despise, yet I confess that I feel a sensation very like envy at your singular choice; and I would not dare to ask of my heart, whether that choice is not happier, as it is certainly more philosophical, than mine."

They had now reached a part of the road where the country assumed a totally different character; the woods and moors were no longer visible, but a broad and somewhat bleak extent

of country lay before them. Here and there only, a few solitary trees broke the uniformity of the wide fields and scanty hedge-rows, and at distant intervals the thin spires of the scattered churches rose like the prayers, of which they were perhaps the symbol, to mingle themselves with heaven.

The gipsy paused: "I will accompany you," said he, "no farther: your way lies straight onwards, and you will reach W—— before noon; farewell, and may God watch over you!"

"Farewell!" said the youth, warmly pressing the hand which was extended to him. "If we ever meet again, it will probably solve a curious riddle, viz. whether *you* are not disgusted with the caravan, and *I* with the world!"

"The latter is more likely than the former," said the gipsy, "for one stands a much greater

chance of being disgusted with others than with oneself; so changing a little the old lines, I will wish you adieu after my own fashion, viz. in verse—

"Go, set thy heart on winged wealth,
Or unto honour's towers aspire;
But give me freedom and my health,
And there's the sum of my desire!"

CHAPTER IV.

"The letter, Madam—have you none for me?"
The Rendezvous.

"Provide surgeons."
The Lover's Progress.

How little, when we read the work, do we care for the author! How little do we reck of the sorrow from which a jest has been forced, or the weariness that an incident has beguiled! But the power to fly from feeling, the recompence of literature for its heart-burnings and cares, the disappointment and the anxiety, the cavil and the "censure sharp"—even this passes away, and custom drags on the dull chain

which enthusiasm once so passionately wore! Alas, for the age when, in the creation of fiction, we could lose the bitterness and barrenness of truth! The sorrows of youth, if not wholly ideal, borrow, at least, from the imagination their colour and their shape. What marvel then that from the imagination come also their consolation and their hope. But now, in manhood, our fancy constitutes but little of our afflictions, and presents to us no avenues for escape. In the toil, the fret, the hot, the unquiet, the exhausting engrossments of maturer years, how soon the midnight lamp loses its enchantment, and the noon-day visions their spell! We are bound by a thousand galling and grinding ties to this hard and unholy earth. We become helots of the soil of dust and clay; denizens of the polluted smoke, the cabined walls, and the stony footing of the inhospitable world. What *now* have our griefs with the

"moonlit melancholy," the gentle tenderness of our young years. Can we tell them any more to the woods and waterfalls? Can we make for them a witness of the answering sea, or the sympathizing stars? Alas! they have now neither commune nor consolation in the voices of Nature, or the mysteries of Romance; they have become the petty stings, and the falling drops, the irritating and vexing littlenesses of life; they have neither dignity on the one hand, nor delusion on the other. One by one they cling around us, like bonds of iron; they multiply their links; they grow over our hearts; and the feelings, once too wild for the very earth, fold their broken wings within the soul. Dull and heavy thoughts, like dead walls, close around the laughing flowers and fields that so enchanted us of yore; the sins, the habits, the reasonings of the world, like rank and gloomy fogs, shut out the exulting heavens from our

view; the limit of our wandering becomes the length of our chain; the height of our soarings, the summit of our cell. Fools—fools that we are then, to imagine that the works of our later years shall savour of the freedom and aspirations of our youth; or that amidst all which hourly and momently recalls and binds our hearts and spirits to the eternal "*self*," we can give life, and zest, and vigour, to the imaginary actions and sentiments of another!

Of a very different cast from these melancholy reflections were the thoughts of our young traveller as he hastened, with a rapid step, upon his solitary way. The fresh air and the exuberance of health gave him that exhilaration of spirit which is so rarely found after a certain age; and every now and then he broke forth into abrupt sentences, which, in betraying the sanguineness of his meditations, disclosed also the character of his mind.

"Turn gipsy, indeed! There is something better in store for me than such a choice. Ay, I have all the world before me where to choose —*not* my place of rest. No, many a long year will pass away ere any place of rest will be my choice! Action! Action! Action! as Demosthenes said. I wonder whether I shall find the letter at W——; *the* letter, the last letter I shall ever have from home; but it is no home to me now; and *I*—*I*—insulted, reviled, trampled upon, without even a name! Well, well, I will earn a still fairer one than that of my forefathers. They shall be proud to own me yet." And with these words the speaker broke off abruptly, with a swelling chest, and a flashing eye; and, as an unknown and friendless adventurer, he gazed on the expanded and silent country around him, he felt, like Castruccio Castrucani, that he could stretch his hands to the east and the west, and exclaim, "Oh, that my power kept

pace with my spirit, then should it grasp the corners of the earth."

The road wound at last from the champaign country, through which it had for some miles extended itself, into a narrow lane girded on either side by a dead fence. As the youth entered this lane, he was somewhat startled by the abrupt appearance of a horseman, whose steed leaped the hedge so close to our hero as almost to endanger his safety. The rider, a gentleman of about five-and-twenty, pulled up, and in a tone of great courtesy, apologized for his inadvertency; the apology was readily admitted, and the horseman rode onwards in the direction of W——.

Trifling as this incident was, the air and mien of the stranger were sufficient to arrest, irresistibly, the thoughts of the young traveller; and before they had flowed into a fresh channel he found himself in the town, and at the door

of the inn to which his expedition was bound. He entered the bar; a buxom landlady, and a still more buxom daughter, were presiding over the spirits of the place.

"You have some boxes and a letter for me, I believe," said the young gentleman to the comely hostess.

"To *you*, Sir! the name, if you please?"

"To—to—to C— L—," said the youth; "the initials C. L., to be left till called for."

"Yes, Sir, we *have* some luggage—came last night by the van,—and a letter besides, Sir, to C. L. also."

The daughter lifted her large dark eyes at the handsome stranger, and felt a wonderful curiosity to know what the letter to C. L. could possibly be about; meanwhile mine hostess raising her hand to a shelf on which stood an Indian slop basin, the great ornament of the

bar at the Golden Fleece, brought from its cavity a well folded and well sealed epistle.

"That is it," cried the youth; "shew me a private room instantly."

"What *can* he want a private room for?" thought the landlady's daughter.

"Shew the gentleman to the Griffin, No. 4, John Merrylack," said the landlady herself.

With an impatient step the owner of the letter followed a slipshod and marvellously unwashed waiter into No. 4—a small square asylum for town travellers, country yeomen, and "single gentlemen;" presenting, on the one side, an admirable engraving of the Marquis of Granby, and on the other an equally delightful view of the stable yard.

Mr. C. L. flung himself on a chair, (there *were* only four chairs in No. 4,) watched the waiter out of the room, seized his letter, broke

open the seal, and read—yes, reader, *you* shall read it too—as follows:—

"Inclosed is the sum to which you are entitled; remember, that it is all which you can ever claim at my hands; remember also, that *you* have made the choice which, now, nothing can persuade me to alter. Be the name you have so long iniquitously borne, henceforth and always forgotten; upon that condition, you may yet hope, from my generosity, the future assistance which you *must* want, but which you could ask not from my affection. Equally, by my heart and my reason, you are for ever *disowned.*"

The letter fell from the reader's hands. He took up the enclosure, it was an order payable somewhere in London for £1000; to him it seemed like the rental of the Indies.

"Be it so!" he said aloud, and slowly; "be it so! With this will I carve my way; many a name in history was built upon a worse foundation!"

With these words he carefully put up the money, re-read the brief note which enclosed it, tore the latter into pieces, and then going towards the aforesaid view of the stable-yard, threw open the window and leant out, *apparently* in earnest admiration of two pigs, which marched, gruntingly, towards him, one goat regaling himself upon a cabbage, and a broken-winded, emaciated horse, which having just been, what the ostler called, "rubbed down," was just going to be, what the ostler called, "fed."

While engaged in this interesting survey, the clatter of hoofs became suddenly heard upon the rough pavement—a bell rung—a dog barked—the pigs grunted—the ostler ran out,

and the stranger, whom our hero had before met on the road, trotted into the yard.

It was evident from the obsequiousness of the attendants, that the horseman was a personage of no mean importance; and indeed, an air, which might almost have been called princely, (not that princes really have the noblest air in the world,) seemed alone sufficient to stamp upon the stranger's brow and figure the patent of aristocracy.

"Who *can* that be?" said the youth, as the equestrian, having dismounted, turned towards the door of the inn: the question was readily answered—"There goes pride and poverty," said the ostler—"Here comes Squire Mordaunt," said the landlady.

At the further end of the stable-yard, through a narrow gate, the youth caught a glimpse of the green sward and springing flowers of a

small garden. Wearied with the sameness of No. 4, rather than with his journey, he sauntered towards the said gate, and seating himself in a small arbour within the garden, surrendered himself to reflection.

The result of this self-conference, was a determination to leave the Golden Fleece by the earliest conveyance which went to that great object and emporium of all his plans and thoughts, London. As, full of this resolution, and buried in the dreams which it conjured up, he was returning with downcast eyes and unheeding steps through the stable-yard, to the delights of No. 4, he was suddenly accosted by a loud and alarmed voice.

"For God's sake, Sir, look out, or——"

The sentence was broken off, the intended warning came too late, our hero staggered back a few steps, and fell stunned and motionless,

against the stable door. Unconsciously he had passed just behind the heels of the stranger's horse, which, being by no means in good humour with the clumsy manœuvres of his *Shampooer*, the ostler, had taken advantage of the opportunity presented to him of working off his irritability, and had consequently inflicted a severe kick upon the right shoulder of Mr. C. L.

The stranger, honoured by the landlady with the name and title of Squire Mordaunt, was in the yard at the moment. He hastened towards the sufferer, who, as yet, was scarcely sensible, and led him into the house. The surgeon of the village was sent for, and appeared: this disciple of Galen, commonly known by the name of Jeremiah Bossolton, was a gentleman considerably more inclined to breadth than length. He was exactly five feet one inch in height, but

thick and solid as a mile-stone; a wig of modern cut, carefully curled and powdered, gave somewhat of a modish, and therefore unseemly grace, to a solemn eye; a mouth drawn down at the corners; a nose that had something in it exceedingly consequential; eye-brows, as sage and shaggy as those of my Lord Eldon; ears large and fiery, and a chin that would have done honour to a Mandarin. Now Mr. Jeremiah Bossolton had a certain peculiarity of speech, to which I fear I shall find it difficult to do justice. Nature had impressed upon his mind a prodigious love of the grandiloquent; Mr. Bossolton, therefore, disdained the exact language of the vulgar, and built unto himself a lofty fabric of words in which his sense managed very frequently to lose itself. Moreover, upon beginning a sentence of peculiar dignity, Mr. Bossolton was, it must be confessed, sometimes at a loss to

conclude it in a period, worthy of the commencement, and this caprice of nature, which had endowed him with more words than thoughts, (necessity is, indeed, the mother of invention,) drove him into a very ingenious method of remedying the deficiency; this was simply the plan of repeating the sense, by inverting the sentence, after the fashion, which, for our reader's better understanding, the first time it occurs, we will designate by italics.

"How long a period of time," said Mr. Bossolton, "has elapsed since this deeply to be regretted and seriously to be investigated accident occurred?"

"Not many minutes," said Mordaunt; "make no farther delay, I beseech you, but examine the arm: it is not broken, I trust?"

"In this world, Mr. Mordaunt," said the practitioner, bowing very low, for the person he addressed was of the most antient lineage in the

county — "in this world, Mr. Mordaunt, even at the earliest period of civilization, delay in matters of judgment has ever been considered of such *vital importance*, and — and such *important vitality*, that we find it inculcated in the proverbs of the Greeks, and the sayings of the Chaldeans, as a *principle of the most expedient utility*, and—and the *most useful expediency!*"

"Mr. Bossolton," said Mordaunt, in a tone of remarkable, and even artificial softness and civility, "have the kindness *immediately* to examine this gentleman's bruises."

Mr. Bossolton looked up in the calm, quiet, but haughty face of the speaker, and, without a moment's hesitation, proceeded to handle the arm, which was already stripped for his survey.

"It frequently occurs," said Mr. Bossolton, "in the course of my profession, that the forcible, sudden, and vehement application of any hard ubstance, like the hoof of a quadruped to the

soft, tender, and carniferous parts of the human frame, such as the arm, occasions a pain, a pang, I should rather say, of the *intensest acuteness*, and—and of *the acutest intensity*."

"Pray, Mr. Bossolton, is the bone broken?" asked Mordaunt.

By this time the patient, who had been hitherto in that languor, which extreme pain always produces at first, especially on young frames, was sufficiently recovered to mark and reply to the kind solicitude of the last speaker; "I thank you, Sir," said he, with a smile, "for your anxiety, but I feel that the bone is *not* broken, the muscles are a little hurt—that is all."

"Young gentleman," said Mr. Bossolton, "you must permit me to say that they who have all their lives been employed in the pursuit, and the investigation, and the analysis of certain studies, are, in general, better acquainted with those studies than they who have neither given

them any importance of consideration; nor—nor any consideration of importance. Establishing this as my hypothesis, I shall now proceed to ——"

"Apply immediate remedies, if you please, Mr. Bossolton," interrupted Mordaunt in that sweet and honied tone which somehow or other always silenced even the garrulous practitioner.

Driven into taciturnity, Mr. Bossolton again inspected the arm; and having given it as his opinion that the arm was bruised in consequence of a violent blow which might have been inflicted by any other concussion of equal force with that produced by the hoof of a horse, he proceeded to urge the application of liniments and bandages, which he promised to prepare with the most solicitudinous dispatch, and the most dispatchful solicitude.

CHAPTER V.

> "Your name, Sir?
> Ha! my name, you say—my name?
> 'Tis well—my name—is—nay—I must consider."
>
> PEDRILLO.

THIS accident occasioned a delay of some days in the plans of the young gentleman, for whom we trust, very soon, both for our own convenience, and that of our reader, to find a fitting appellation.

Mr. Mordaunt, after seeing every attention paid to him, both surgical and hospitable, took his departure with a promise to call the next day; leaving behind him a strong impression of

curiosity and interest to serve our hero as some mental occupation until his return. The bonny landlady came up in a new cap, with blue ribbons, in the course of the evening, to pay a visit of inquiry to the handsome patient, who was removed from the Griffin, No. 4, to the Dragon, No. 8—a room whose merits were exactly in proportion to its number, viz. twice as great as those of No. 4.

"Well, Sir," said Mrs. Taptape, with a courtesy, "I trust you find yourself better."

"At *this* moment I do," said the gallant youth, with a significant air.

"Hem!" quoth the landlady.

A pause ensued. In spite of the compliment, a certain suspicion suddenly darted across the mind of the hostess. Strong as are the prepossessions of the sex, those of the profession are much stronger.

"Honest folk," thought the landlady, "don't

travel with their initials only; the last 'Whitehall Evening' was full of shocking accounts of swindlers and cheats; and I gave fourteen pounds odd shillings for the silver tea-pot John has brought him up—as if the china one was not good enough for a foot traveller."

Pursuing these ideas, Mrs. Taptape, looking bashfully down, said,

"By-the-bye, Sir, Mr. Bossolton asked me what name he should put down in his book for the medicines; what would you please me to say, Sir?"

"Mr. who?" said the youth, elevating his eye-brows.

"Mr. Bossolton, Sir, the apothecary."

"Oh! Bossolton! very odd name that—not near so pretty as — dear me — what a beautiful cap that is of yours!" said the young gentleman.

"Lord, Sir, do you think so; the ribbon *is* very pretty; but—but as I was saying what

name shall I tell Mr. Bossolton to put in his books?" This, thought Mrs. Taptape, is coming to the point.

"Well!" said the youth, slowly, and as if in a profound reverie, "well, Bossolton is certainly the most singular name I ever heard; he does right to put it in a book—it is quite a curiosity—is he clever?"

"Very, Sir," said the landlady, somewhat sharply; "but it is *your* name, not *his*, that he wishes to put into his book."

"Mine!" said the youth—who appeared to have been seeking to gain time in order to answer a query which most men find requires very little deliberation—"Mine, you say; *my* name is Linden—Clarence Linden—you understand!"

"What a pretty name!" thought the landlady's daughter, who was listening at the keyhole; "but how *could* he admire that odious cap of *Ma's!*"

" And now, landlady, I wish you would send up my boxes; and get me a newspaper, if you please."

" Yes, Sir," said the landlady—and she rose to retire.

" I do not think," said the youth to himself, " that I could have hit on a prettier name—and so novel a one too—Clarence Linden—why, if I were that pretty girl at the bar I could fall in love with the very words—Shakspeare was quite wrong when he said—

' A rose by any other name would smell as sweet.'

A rose by *any* name would not smell as sweet; if a rose's name was Jeremiah Bossolton, for instance, it would not, to my nerves, at least, smell of anything but an apothecary's shop."

When Mordaunt called the next morning, he found Clarence much better, and carelessly turning over various books, part of the contents

of the luggage superscribed C. L. A book of whatever description was among the few companions for whom Mordaunt had neither fastidiousness nor reserve; and the sympathy of taste between him and the sufferer, gave rise to a conversation less cold and common-place than it might otherwise have been. And when Mordaunt, after a stay of some length, rose to depart, he pressed Linden to return his visit before he left that part of the country; his place, he added, was only about five miles distant from W——. Linden, greatly interested in his visitor, was not slow in accepting the invitation, and, perhaps, for the first time in his life, Mordaunt found himself shaking hands with a stranger he had only known two days.

CHAPTER VI.

> "While yet a child, and long before his time,
> He had perceived the presence and the power
> Of greatness.
> * * * * *
> But eagerly he read, and read again.
> * * * * *
> Yet still uppermost
> Nature was at his heart, as if he felt,
> Though yet he knew not how, a wasting power
> In all things that from her sweet influence
> Might seek to wean him. Therefore with her hues,
> Her forms, and with the spirit of her forms,
> He clothed the nakedness of austere truth."
>
> WORDSWORTH.

ALGERNON MORDAUNT was the last son of an old and honourable race, which had centuries back numbered princes in its line. His parents had had many children, but all (save Algernon

the youngest) died in their infancy. His mother perished in giving him birth. Constitutional infirmity, and the care of mercenary nurses, contributed to render Algernon a weakly and delicate child; hence came a taste for loneliness and a passion for study, and from these sprung on the one hand the fastidiousness and reserve, which render us unamiable, and on the other the loftiness of spirit and the kindness of heart, which are the best and earliest gifts of literature, and more than counterbalance our deficiencies in the 'minor morals' due to society by their tendency to increase our attention to the greater ones belonging to mankind. Mr. Mordaunt was a man of luxurious habits and gambling propensities: wedded to London, he left the house of his ancestors to moulder in desertion and decay; but to this home, Algernon was constantly consigned during his vacations from school; and its solitude and cheerlessness, joined to a disposi-

tion naturally melancholy and thoughtful, gave those colours to his temper which subsequent events were calculated to deepen, not efface.

Truth obliges us to state, despite our partiality to Mordaunt, that when he left his school, after a residence of six years, it was with the bitter distinction of having been the most unpopular boy in it. Why, nobody could exactly explain, for his severest enemies could not accuse him of ill-nature, cowardice, or avarice, and these make the three capital offences of a school-boy; but Algernon Mordaunt had already acquired the knowledge of himself, and could explain the cause, though with a bitter and swelling heart. His ill health, his long residence at home, his unfriended and almost orphan situation, his early habits of solitude and reserve, all these so calculated to make the spirit shrink within itself, made him, on his entrance at school, if not unsocial, *appear* so: this

was the primary reason of his unpopularity; the second was, that he perceived, for he was sensitive (and consequently acute) to the extreme, the misfortune of his manner, and in his wish to rectify it, it became doubly unprepossessing; to reserve, it now added embarrassment, to coldness, gloom: and the pain he felt in addressing or being addressed by another, was naturally and necessarily reciprocal, for the effects of sympathy are no where so wonderful, yet so invisible, as in the manners.

By degrees he shunned the intercourse which had for him nothing but distress, and his volatile acquaintance were perhaps the first to set him the example. Often in his solitary walks he stopped afar off to gaze upon the sports, which none ever solicited him to share; and as the shout of laughter and of happy hearts came, peal after peal, upon his ear, he turned enviously, yet not malignantly away, with tears, which not

all his pride could curb, and muttered to himself, "And these, these hate me!"

There are two feelings common to all high or affectionate natures, that of extreme susceptibility to opinion, and that of extreme bitterness at its injustice. These feelings were Mordaunt's; but the keen edge which one blow injures, the repetition blunts; and, by little and little, Algernon became not only accustomed, but, as he persuaded himself, indifferent to his want of popularity; his step grew more lofty, and his address more collected, and that which was once diffidence, gradually hardened into pride.

His residence at the university was neither without honour nor profit. A college life was then, as now, either the most retired or the most social of all others; I need scarcely say which it was to Mordaunt, but his was the age when solitude is desirable, and when the closet

forms the mind better than the world. Driven upon itself, his intellect became inquiring, and its resources profound; admitted to their inmost recesses, he revelled among the treasures of ancient lore, and in his dreams of the Nymph and Naiad, or his researches after truth in the deep wells of the Stagyrite or the golden fountains of Plato, he forgot the loneliness of his lot, and exhausted the hoarded enthusiasm of his soul.

But his mind, rather thoughtful than imaginative, found no idol like "divine philosophy." It delighted to plunge itself into the mazes of metaphysical investigation—to trace the springs of the intellect—to connect the arcana of the universe—to descend into the darkest caverns, or to wind through the minutest mysteries of nature, and rise, step by step, to that arduous elevation on which Thought stands dizzy and confused, looking beneath upon a

clouded earth, and above, upon an unfathomable heaven.

Rarely wandering from his chamber, known personally to few, and intimately to none, Algernon yet left behind him at the university the most remarkable reputation of his day. He had obtained some of the highest of academical honours, and by that proverbial process of vulgar minds which ever frames the magnificent from the unknown,—the seclusion in which he lived, and the recondite nature of his favourite pursuits, attached to his name a still greater celebrity and interest, than all the orthodox and regular dignities he had acquired. There are few men who do not console themselves for not being generally loved, if they can reasonably hope that they are generally esteemed. Mordaunt had now grown reconciled to himself and to his kind. He had opened to his interest a world in his own breast, and it

consoled him for his mortification in the world without. But, better than this, his habits as well as studies had strengthened the principles and confirmed the nobility of his mind. He was not, it is true, more kind, more benevolent, more upright than before; but those virtues now emanated from principle—not emotion.

We have often thought that principle to the mind is what a free constitution is to a people: without that principle, or that free constitution, the one may be for the moment as good — the other as happy, but we cannot tell how long the goodness and the happiness will continue.

On leaving the university, his father sent for him to town. He staid there a short time, and mingled partially in its festivities; but the pleasures of English dissipation have for a century been the same, heartless without gaiety, and dull

without refinement. Nor could Mordaunt, the most fastidious, yet warm-hearted of human beings, reconcile to the cold insipidities of patrician society either his tastes or his affections. His father's habits and evident distresses deepened his disgust to his situation; for the habits were incurable, and the distresses increasing; and nothing but a circumstance, which Mordaunt did not then understand, prevented the final sale of an estate, already little better than a pompous incumbrance.

It was therefore with that half painful, half pleasurable sensation, with which we avoid contemplating a ruin we cannot prevent, that Mordaunt set out upon that continental tour deemed then so necessary a part of education. His father, on taking leave of him, seemed deeply affected. "Go, my son," said he, "may God bless you, and not punish me too severely. I

have wronged you deeply, and I cannot bear to look upon your face."

To these words Algernon attached a general, but they cloaked a peculiar meaning: in three years, he returned to England—his father had been dead some months, and the signification of his parting address was already deciphered—but of this hereafter.

In his travels, he encountered an Englishman, whose name we will not yet mention, a person of great reputed wealth — a merchant — yet a man of pleasure — a voluptuary in life, yet a saint in reputation — or, to abstain from the antithetical analysis of a character, which will not be corporeally presented to the reader, till our tale is considerably advanced—one who drew from nature a singular combination of shrewd, but false conclusions, and a peculiar philosophy destined hereafter to

contrast the colours, and prove the practical utility of that which was espoused by Mordaunt.

There can be no education without the lessons of the world form a share. Experience in expanding Algernon's powers had ripened his virtues. Nor had the years which had converted knowledge into wisdom, failed in imparting polish to refinement. His person had acquired a greater grace, and his manners an easier dignity than before. His noble and generous mind had worked its impress upon his features, and his mien, and those who could overcome the first coldness and shrinking hauteur of his address, found it required no minute examination to discover the real expression of the eloquent eye, and of the chiselled and classic features.

He had not been long returned, before he found two enemies to his tranquillity—the one was love, the other appeared in the more for-

midable guise of a claimant to his estate. Before Algernon was aware of the nature of the latter, he went to consult with his lawyer.

"If the claim be just, I shall not of course proceed to law," said Mordaunt.

"But without the estate, Sir, you have nothing!"

"True," said Algernon, calmly.

But the claim was not just, and to law he went.

In this law-suit, however, he had one assistant in an old relation, who had seen, indeed, but very little of him, but who compassionated his circumstances, and, above all, hated his opponent. This relation was rich and childless; and there were not wanting those who predicted that his money would ultimately discharge the mortgages, and repair the house of the young representative of the Mordaunt honours. But the old kinsman was obstinate—self-willed—and under the absolute dominion of patrician pride;

and it was by no means improbable, that the independence of Mordaunt's character would soon create a disunion between them, by clashing against the peculiarities of his relation's temper.

It was a clear and sunny morning when Linden, tolerably recovered of his hurt, set out upon a sober and aged pony, which, after some natural pangs of shame, he had hired of his landlord, to Mordaunt Court.

Mordaunt's house was situated in the midst of a wild and extensive park, surrounded with woods, and interspersed with trees of the stateliest growth, now scattered into irregular groups, now marshalled into sweeping avenues; while, ever and anon, Linden caught glimpses of a rapid and brawling rivulet, which, in many a slight but sounding waterfall, gave a music strange and spirit-like to the thick copses and forest-glades, through which it went exulting on its way. The deer lay half concealed by the

fern among which they couched, turning their stately crests towards the stranger, but not stirring from their rest; while from the summit of beeches, which would have shamed the pavilion of Tityrus, the rooks—those monks of the feathered people—were loud in their confused, but, to the ear of an aristocrat, not displeasing confabulations.

As Linden approached the house, he was struck with the melancholy air of desolation which spread over and around it: fragments of stone, above which clombe the rank weed, insolently proclaiming the triumph of nature's meanest offspring over the wrecks of art; a moat dried up, a railing once of massy gilding, intended to fence a lofty terrace on the right from the incursions of the deer, but which, shattered and decayed, now seemed to ask, with the satirist—

> "To what end did our lavish ancestors
> Erect of old these stately piles of ours?"

A chapel on the left, perfectly in ruins, all appeared strikingly to denote that time had outstript fortune, and that the years, which alike hallow and destroy, had broken the consequence in deepening the antiquity of the house of Mordaunt.

The building itself agreed but too well with the tokens of decay around it; most of the windows were shut up, and the shutters of dark oak, richly gilt, contrasted forcibly with the shattered panes and mouldered framing of the glass. It was a house of irregular architecture; originally built in the thirteenth century it had received its last improvement, with the most lavish expence, during the reign of Anne; and it united the Gallic magnificence of the latter period with the strength and grandeur of the former; it was in a great part overgrown with ivy, and where that insidious ornament had not reached, the signs of decay, and even ruin, were fully

visible. The sun itself, bright and cheering as it shone over nature, making the green sod glow like emeralds, and the rivulet flash in its beam, like one of those streams of real light, imagined by Swedenbourg in his visions of heaven; and clothing tree, and fell, brake, and hillock, with the lavish hues of the infant summer; the sun itself only made more desolate, because more conspicuous—the venerable fabric, which the youthful traveller frequently paused more accurately to survey, and its laughing and sportive beams, playing over chink and crevice, seemed almost as insolent and untimeous as the mirth of the young mocking the silent grief of some grey-headed and solitary mourner.

Clarence had now reached the porch, and the sound of the shrill bell he touched rung with a strange note, through the general stillness of the place. A single servant appeared, and ushered Clarence through a screen hall of stone,

TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL LIBRARY

hung round with relics of armour, and ornamented on the side opposite the music gallery, with a solitary picture of gigantic size, exhibiting the full length of the gaunt person and sable steed of Sir Piers de Mordaunt, returning from the Holy Land. Through this hall, Clarence was led to a small chamber, hung with uncouth and tattered arras, in which, seemingly immersed in papers, he found the owner of the domain.

"Your studies," said Linden, after the salutations of the day, "seem to harmonize with the venerable antiquity of your home;" and he pointed to the crabbed characters and faded ink of the papers on the table.

"So they ought," answered Mordaunt, with a faint smile; "for they are called from their quiet archives in order to support my struggle for that home. But I fear the struggle is in vain, and that the quibbles of law will transfer into other hands a possession I am

foolish enough to value the more from my inability to maintain it."

Something of this Clarence had before learnt from the communicative gossip of his landlady; and less desirous to satisfy his curiosity than to lead the conversation from a topic which he felt must be so unwelcome to Mordaunt, he expressed a wish to see the state apartments of the house. With something of shame at the neglect they had necessarily experienced, and something of pride at the splendour which no neglect could efface, Mordaunt yielded to the request, and led the way up a staircase of black oak, the walls and ceiling of which were covered with frescos of Italian art, to a suite of apartments in which time and dust seemed the only tenants. Lingeringly did Clarence gaze upon the rich velvet, the costly mirrors, the motley paintings of a hundred ancestors, and the antique cabinets, containing, among the most

hoarded relics of the Mordaunt race, curiosities which the hereditary enthusiasm of a line of cavaliers had treasured as the most sacred of heir-looms, and which even to the philosophical mind of Mordaunt possessed a value he did not seek too minutely to analyse. Here was the goblet from which the first prince of Tudor had drank after the field of Bosworth. Here the ring with which the chivalrous Francis the First had rewarded a signal feat of that famous Robert de Mordaunt, who, as a poor but adventurous cadet of the house, had brought to the "first gentleman of France" the assistance of his sword. Here was the glove which Sir Walter had received from the royal hand of Elizabeth, and worn in the lists upon a crest which the lance of no antagonist in that knightly court could abase. And here, more sacred than all, because connected with the memory of misfortune, was a small box of silver which the last king of an

evil and imbecile, but fated line, had placed in the hands of the grey-headed descendant of that Sir Walter after the battle of the Boyne, in saying with that happy turn of expression, in which all the Stuarts excelled, "Keep this, Sir Everard Mordaunt, for the sake of one who has purchased the luxury of gratitude at the price of a throne!"

As Clarence glanced from these relics to the figure of Mordaunt, who stood at a little distance leaning against the window, with arms folded on his breast, and with eyes abstractedly wandering over the noble woods and extended park, which spread below, he could not but feel that if birth has indeed the power of setting its seal upon the form, it was never more conspicuous than in the broad front and lofty air of the last descendant of the race by whose memorials he was surrounded. Touched by the fallen fortunes of Mordaunt, and interested by

the uncertainty which the chances of law threw over his future fate, Clarence could not resist exclaiming, with some warmth and abruptness—

"And by what subterfuge or cavil does the present claimant of these estates hope to dislodge their rightful possessor?"

"Why," answered Mordaunt, "it is a long story in detail, but briefly told in epitome. My father was an extravagant and dissipated man, and a few months after his death, Mr. Vavasour, a distant relation, produced a paper, by which it appeared that my father had for a certain sum of ready money disposed of his estates to this Mr. Vavasour, upon condition that they should not be claimed, nor the treaty divulged, till after his death; the reason for this proviso seems to have been the shame my father felt for his exchange, and his fear of the censures of that world to which he was always devoted."

"But how unjust to you!" said Clarence, indignantly.

"Not so much so as it seems," said Mordaunt, deprecatingly; "for I was then but a sickly boy, and according to the physicians, and, I sincerely believe, according also to my poor father's belief, almost certain of a premature death. In that case, Vavasour would have been the nearest heir; and this expectancy, by the by, joined to the mortgages on the property, made the sum given ridiculously disproportioned to the value of the estate. I must confess that the news came upon me like a thunderbolt. I should have yielded up possession immediately, but was informed by my lawyers, that my father had no legal right to dispose of the property; the discussion of that right forms the ground of the present law-suit. For me, I have but little hope, and even were I to be successful, the ex-

pences of law would leave me like Pyrrhus, lost by my very success. No," continued Mordaunt, proudly, yet mournfully, "I am prepared for the worst, and, thank heaven, even in that worst, there *is* a spot which affliction can indeed blight, but which fortune, so far from destroying cannot even diminish."

Clarence was silent, and Mordaunt, after a brief pause, once more resumed his guidance. Their tour ended in a large library filled with books, and this, Mordaunt informed his guest, was his chosen and ordinary room.

An old carved table was covered with works which for the most part possessed for the young mind of Clarence, more accustomed to imagine than reflect, but a very feeble attraction; on looking them over, he, however, found, half hid by a huge folio of Hobbes, and another of Locke, a volume of Milton's poems: this paved the way to a conversation, in which both had an

equal interest, for both were enthusiastic in the character and genius of that wonderful man, for whom 'the divine and solemn countenance of Freedom' was dearer than the light of day, and whose solitary spell, accomplishing what the whole family of earth once vainly began upon the Plain of Shinar, has built of materials more imperishable than 'slime and brick,' "a city and a tower whose summit *has* reached to Heaven."

It was with mutual satisfaction that Mordaunt and his guest continued their commune, till the hour of dinner was announced to them by a bell, which, formerly intended as an alarum, now served the more peaceful purpose of a more agreeable summons.

The same servant who had admitted Clarence ushered them through the great hall into the dining-room, and was their solitary attendant during their repast.

The temper of Mordaunt was essentially

grave and earnest, and his conversation almost invariably took the tone of his mind; this made their conference turn upon less minute and common-place topics than one between such new acquaintances, especially of different ages, usually does.

"You will positively go to London to-morrow, then?" said Mordaunt, as the servant removing the appurtenances of dinner left them alone.

"Positively," answered Clarence. "I go there to carve my own fortunes, and, to say truth, I am impatient to begin."

Mordaunt looked earnestly at the frank face of the speaker, and wondered that one so young, so well educated, and from his air and manner, evidently of gentle blood, should appear so utterly thrown upon his own resources.

"I wish you success," said he, after a pause; "and it is a noble part of the organization of this world, that by increasing those riches which

are beyond fortune, we do in general take the surest method of obtaining those which are in its reach."

Clarence looked inquiringly at Mordaunt, who perceiving it, continued, "I see that I should explain myself farther. I will do so by using the thoughts of a mind perhaps the most beautiful and accomplished which this country ever produced. 'Of all which belongs to us,' said Bolingbroke, 'the least valuable parts can alone fall under the will of others. *Whatever is best is safest*; lies out of the reach of human power; can neither be given nor taken away. Such is this great and beautiful work of nature, the world. Such is the mind of man which contemplates and admires the world whereof it makes the noblest part. These are inseparably ours, and as long as we remain in one we shall enjoy the other!'"

"Beautiful, indeed!" exclaimed Clarence,

with the enthusiasm of a young and pure heart, to which every loftier sentiment is always beautiful.

"And true as beautiful!" said Mordaunt. "Nor is this all, for the mind can even dispense with that world, 'of which it forms a part,' if we can create within it a world still more inaccessible to chance. But (and I now return to and explain my former observation) the means by which we can effect this *peculiar* world, can be rendered equally subservient to our advancement and prosperity in that which we share in common with our race; for the riches, which by the aid of wisdom we heap up in the storehouses of the mind, are, though not the only, the most customary coin by which external prosperity is bought. So that the philosophy which can alone give independence to ourselves, becomes, under the name of honesty, the best policy in commerce with our kind."

In conversation of this nature, which the sin-

cerity and lofty enthusiasm of Mordaunt rendered interesting to Clarence, despite of the distaste to the serious so ordinary to youth, the hours passed on, till the increasing evening warned Linden to depart.

"Adieu!" said he to Mordaunt. "I know not when we shall meet again, but if we ever do, I will make it my boast, whether in prosperity or misfortune, not to have forgotten the pleasure I have this day enjoyed!"

Returning his guest's farewell with a warmth unusual to his manner, Mordaunt followed him to the door, and saw him depart.

Fate ordained that they should pursue in very different paths, their several destinies; nor did it afford them an opportunity of meeting again, till years and events had severely tried the virtue of one, and materially altered the prospects of the other.

The next morning, Clarence Linden was on his road to London.

CHAPTER VII.

"Upon my word," cries Jones, "thou art a very odd fellow, and I like thy humour extremely."

FIELDING.

THE rumbling and jolting vehicle which conveyed Clarence to the metropolis, stopped at the door of a tavern in Holborn. Linden was ushered into a close coffee-room, and presented with a bill of fare. While he was deliberating between the merits of mutton-chops and beef-steaks, a man with a brown coat, brown breeches, and a brown wig, walked into the room; he cast a curious glance at Clarence, and then turned to the waiter.

"A pair of slippers!"

"Yes, Sir," and the waiter disappeared.

"I suppose," said the brown gentleman to Clarence, "I suppose, Sir, you are the gentleman just come to town?"

"You are right, Sir," said Clarence.

"Very well, very well, indeed," resumed the stranger, musingly. "I took the liberty of looking at your boxes in the passage; I knew a lady, Sir, a relation of yours, I think."

"Sir!" exclaimed Linden, colouring violently.

"At least I suppose so, for her name was just the same as yours, only, at least, one letter difference between them: your's is *Linden,* I see, Sir; her's was *Minden:* am I right in my conjecture, that you are related to her?"

"Sir," answered Clarence, gravely, "notwithstanding the similarity of our names, we are not related."

"Very extraordinary," replied the stranger.

"Very," repeated Linden.

"I had the honour, Sir," said the brown gentleman, "to make Mrs. Minden many presents of value, and I should have been very happy to have obliged you in the same manner, had you been any way connected with that worthy gentlewoman."

"You are very kind," said Linden, "you are very kind; and since such were your intentions, I believe I *must* have been connected with Mrs. Minden. At all events, as you justly observe, there is only the difference of a letter between our names, a discrepancy too slight, I am sure, to alter your benevolent intentions."

Here the waiter returned with the slippers.

The stranger slowly unbuttoned his gaiters. "Sir," said he to Linden, "we will renew our conversation presently."

No sooner had the generous friend of Mrs.

Minden deposited his feet into their easy tenements, than he quitted the room.

"Pray," said Linden to the waiter, when he had ordered his simple repast, "who is that gentleman *in* brown?"

"*Mr.* Brown!" replied the waiter.

"And who, or what is Mr. Brown?" asked our hero.

Before the waiter could reply, Mr. Brown returned, with a large bandbox carefully enveloped in a blue handkerchief. "You come from ——, Sir?" said the latter, quietly seating himself at the same table as Linden.

"No, Sir, I do not."

"From ——, then?"

"No, Sir!—from W——."

"W——?—ay—well, I knew a lady with a name very like W—— (the late Lady Waddilove) extremely well. I made her some valuable presents—her ladyship was very sensible of it."

"I don't doubt it, Sir," replied Clarence; "such instances of general beneficence rarely occur!"

"I have some magnificent relics of her ladyship in this box," returned Mr. Brown.

"Really! then she was no less generous than yourself, I presume?"

"Yes, her ladyship *was* remarkably generous. About a week before she died, (the late Lady Waddilove was quite sensible of her danger,) she called me to her—'Brown,' said she, 'you are a good creature; I have had my most valuable things from you. I am not ungrateful; I will leave you—*my lady's maid!* She is as clever as you are, and as good.' I took the hint, Sir, and married. It was an excellent bargain.—My wife is a charming woman; she entirely fitted up Mrs. Minden's wardrobe, and I furnished the house. Mrs. Minden was greatly indebted to us."

"God help me!" thought Clarence, "the man is certainly mad."

The waiter entered with the dinner; and Mr. Brown, who seemed to have a delicate aversion to any conversation in the presence of the Ganymede of the Holborn tavern, immediately ceased his communications: meanwhile, Clarence took the opportunity to survey him more minutely than he had hitherto done.

His new acquaintance was in age about forty-eight; in stature, rather under the middle height; and thin, dried, withered, yet muscular withal, like a man, who, in stinting his stomach for the sake of economy, does not the less enjoy the power of undergoing any fatigue or exertion that an object of adequate importance may demand. We have said already that he was attired, like twilight, "in a suit of sober brown;" and there was a formality, a precision, and a cat-like sort of cleanliness in his garb, which

savoured strongly of the respectable coxcombry of the counting-house, or the till. His face was lean, it is true, but not emaciated; and his complexion, sallow and adust, harmonized well with the colours of his clothing. An eye of the darkest hazel, sharp, shrewd, and flashing at times, especially at the mention of the euphonious name of Lady Waddilove—a name frequently upon the lips of the inheritor of her Abigail—with a fire that might be called brilliant, was of that modest species which can seldom encounter the straightforward glance of another; on the contrary, it seemed restlessly uneasy in any settled place, and wandered from ceiling to floor, and corner to corner, with an inquisitive, though apparently careless glance, as if seeking for something to admire or haply to appropriate; it also seemed to be the especial care of Mr. Brown to veil, as far as he was able, the vivacity of his looks beneath an expression of

open and unheeding good nature, an expression strangely enough contrasting with the closeness and sagacity which nature had indelibly stamped upon features pointed, aquiline, and impressed with a strong mixture of the Judaical physiognomy. The manner and bearing of this gentleman partook of the same undecided character as his countenance; they seemed to be struggling between civility and importance; a real eagerness to make the acquaintance of the person he addressed, and an assumed recklessness of the advantages which that acquaintance could bestow—it was like the behaviour of a man who is desirous of having the best possible motives imputed to him, but is fearful lest that desire should not be utterly fulfilled. At the first glance, you would have pledged yourself for his respectability; at the second, you might have half suspected him to be a rogue; and after you had been half an hour in his company, you would

confess yourself in the obscurest doubt which was the better guess, the first or the last. A very experienced judge of outward signs would probably have decided on this peculiar instance, according to the general character of mankind, and have set down Mr. Brown in the tablets of his mind as a man neither good nor bad—the latter, perhaps, with temptation, the former without—viz. a bit of a knave in his profession, whatever that might be, but an admirably honest man, when it was not the interest of his vocation to be the reverse.

"Waiter!" said Mr. Brown, looking enviously at the viands upon which Linden, having satisfied his curiosity, was now, with all the appetite of youth, regaling himself. "Waiter!"

"Yes, Sir!"

"Bring me a sandwich—and—and, waiter, see that I have plenty of—plenty of——"

"What; Sir?"

"Plenty of mustard, waiter!"

"Mustard" (and here Mr. Brown addressed himself to Clarence) "is a very wonderful assistance to the digestion. By the by, Sir, if you want any curiously fine mustard, I can procure you some pots *quite capital*—a great favour, though — they were smuggled from France especially for the use of the late Lady Waddilove."

"Thank you," said Linden, drily; "I shall be very happy to accept any thing you may wish to offer me."

Mr. Brown took a pocket-book from his pouch. "Six pots of mustard, Sir—shall I say six?"

"As many as you please," replied Clarence; and Mr. Brown wrote down "Six pots of French mustard."

"You are a very young gentleman, Sir," said

Mr. Brown, "probably intended for some profession—I don't mean to be impertinent, but if I can be of any assistance—"

"You can, Sir," replied Linden, "and immediately—have the kindness to ring the bell."

Mr. Brown, with a grave smile, did as he was desired; the waiter re-entered, and receiving a whispered order from Clarence, again disappeared.

"What profession did you say, Sir?" renewed Mr. Brown, artfully.

"None!" replied Linden.

"Oh, very well—very well indeed. Then as an idle, independent gentleman, you will of course be a bit of a beau—want some shirts, possibly—fine cravats too—gentlemen wear a particular pattern now—gloves, gold, or shall I say *gilt* chain, watch and seals, a ring or two, and a snuff-box?"

"Sir, you are vastly obliging," said Clarence, in undisguised surprise.

"Not at all, I would do any thing for a relation of Mrs. Minden." The waiter re-entered; "Sir," said he to Linden, "your room is quite ready."

"I am glad to hear it," said Clarence, rising. "Mr. Brown, I have the honour of wishing you a good evening."

"Stay, Sir—stay; you have not looked into these things belonging to the late Lady Waddilove."

"Another time," said Clarence, hastily.

"To-morrow at ten o'clock," muttered Mr. Brown.

"I am exceedingly glad I have got rid of that fellow," said Linden to himself, as he stretched his limbs in his easy chair, and drank off the last glass of his pint of port. "If I have not already seen, I have already guessed enough

of the world, to know that you are to look to your pockets, when a man offers you a present; they who 'give,' also 'take away.' So here I am in London, with an order for £1000 in my purse, the wisdom of Dr. Latinas in my head, and the health of eighteen in my veins; will it not be my own fault if I do not both *enjoy*, and *make* myself——"

And then yielding to meditations of future success, partaking strongly of the young, inexperienced, and sanguine temperament of the soliloquist, Clarence passed the hours, till his pillow summoned him to dreams no less ardent, and perhaps no less unreal.

CHAPTER VIII.

"O! how I long to be employed."
Every Man in his Humour.

Clarence was sitting the next morning over the very unsatisfactory breakfast which tea made out of broomsticks, and cream out of chalk, (adulteration thrived even in 17—) afforded, when the waiter threw open the door, and announced Mr. Brown.

"Just in time, Sir, you perceive," said Mr. Brown; "I am punctuality itself: exactly a quarter of a minute to ten. I have brought

you the pots of French mustard, and I have some very valuable articles which you *must* want, besides."

"Thank you, Sir," said Linden, not well knowing what to say; and Mr. Brown, untieing a silk handkerchief, produced three shirts, two pots of pomatum, a tobacco canister, with a German pipe, four pair of silk stockings, two gold seals, three rings, and a stuffed parrot!

"Beautiful articles these, Sir," said Mr. Brown, with a snuffle "of inward sweetness long drawn out," and expressive of great admiration of his offered treasures; "beautiful articles, Sir, ar'nt they?"

"Very, the parrot in particular," said Clarence.

"Yes, Sir," returned Mr. Brown, "the parrot is indeed quite a jewel; it belonged to the late Lady Waddilove; I offer it to you with considerable regret, for——"

"Oh!" interrupted Clarence, "pray do not rob yourself of such a jewel, it really is of no use to me."

"I know that, Sir—I know that," replied Mr. Brown; "but it will be of use to your friends, it will be inestimable to any old aunt, Sir, any maiden lady living at Hackney, any curious elderly gentleman fond of a nick-nack. I knew you would know some one to send it to as a present, even though you should not want it yourself."

"Bless me!" thought Linden, "was there ever such generosity? not content with providing for my wants, he extends his liberality even to any possible relations I may possess."

Mr. Brown now retied 'the beautiful articles' in his handkerchief. "Shall I leave them, Sir?" said he.

"Why, really," said Clarence, "I thought yesterday that you were in jest; but you must

be aware, that I cannot accept presents from any gentleman so much—so much a stranger to me as you are."

"No, Sir, I *am* aware of that," replied Mr. Brown; "and in order to remove the unpleasantness of such a feeling, Sir, on your part—merely in order to do that, I assure you with no other view, Sir, in the world—I have just noted down the articles on this piece of paper; but, as you will perceive, at a price so low, as still to make them actually presents in every thing but the name. Oh, Sir, I perfectly understand your delicacy, and would not, for the world, violate it."

So saying, Mr. Brown put a paper into Linden's hands, the substance of which a very little more experience of the world would have enabled Clarence to foresee: it ran thus:

CLARENCE LINDEN, ESQ., Dr.

TO MR. MORRIS BROWN.

	£	s.	d.
To Six Pots of French Mustard	£ 1	4	0
To Three Superfine Holland Shirts, with Cambric Bosoms, complete..........................	4	1	0
To Two Pots of Superior French Pomatum	0	10	0
To a Tobacco Canister of enamelled Tin, with a finely executed head of the Pretender: slight flaw in the same	0	12	6
To a German Pipe, second hand, as good as new, belonging to the late Lady Waddilove	1	18	0
To Four Pair of Black Silk Hose, ditto, belonging to her Ladyship's husband	2	8	0
To Two Superfine Embossed Gold Watch Seals, with a Classical Motto and Device to each, *viz.*, Mouse Trap and "Prenez Garde," to one, and "Who the devil can this be from?"* to the other	1	1	0
To a remarkably fine antique Ring, having the head of a Monkey	0	16	6
A ditto, with blue stones	0	12	6
A ditto, with green ditto	0	12	6
A Stuffed Green Parrot, a remarkable favourite of the late Lady W.	2	2	0
Sum Total	£15	18	0
Deduction for Ready Money	0	13	6
	15	4	6
Mr. Brown's Profits for Brokerage ..	1	10	0
Sum Total	£16	14	6

Received of Clarence Linden, Esq. this day of 17—

* One would not have thought these ingenious devices had been of so ancient a date as the year 17—.

It would have been no unamusing study to watch the expression of Clarence's face as it lengthened over each article until he had reached the final conclusion. He then carefully folded up the paper, restored it to Mr. Brown, with a low bow, and said, "Excuse me, Sir, I will not take advantage of your generosity; keep your parrot and other treasures for some more worthy person. I cannot accept what you are pleased to term your very valuable *presents!*"

"Oh, it's well, very well," said Mr. Brown, pocketing the paper, and seeming perfectly unconcerned at the termination of his proposals; "perhaps I can serve you in some other way?"

"In none, I thank you," replied Linden.

"Just consider, Sir!—you will want lodgings; I can find them for you, cheaper than you can yourself; or perhaps you would prefer going into a nice, quiet, genteel family, where you can

have both board and lodging, and be treated in every way as the pet child of the master?"

A thought crossed Linden's mind. He was going to stay in town some time; he was ignorant of its ways; he had neither friends nor relations, at least none to visit and consult; moreover, hotels he knew were expensive; lodgings, though cheaper, might, if tolerably comfortable, greatly exceed the sum prudence would allow him to expend; would not this plan proposed by Mr. Brown of going into a 'nice, quiet, genteel family,' be the most advisable one he could adopt? The generous benefactor of the late and ever to be lamented Lady Waddilove perceived his advantage, and making the most of Clarence's hesitation, continued—

"I know of a charming little abode, Sir, situated in the suburbs of London, quite *rus in urbe*, as the scholars say; you can have a

delightful little back parlour, looking out upon the garden, and all to yourself, I dare say."

"And pray, Mr. Brown," interrupted Linden, "what price do you think would be demanded for such enviable accommodations?—if you offer me them as '*a present*,' I shall have nothing to say to them."

"Oh, Sir," answered Mr. Brown, "the price will be a trifle—a mere trifle; but I will inquire, and let you know the exact sum in the course of the day—all they want is a respectable, gentleman-like lodger; and I am sure so near a relation of Mrs. Minden will, upon my recommendation, be received with avidity. Then you won't have any of these very valuable articles, Sir? You'll repent it, Sir—take my word for it, hem!"

"Since," replied Clarence drily, "your word appears so much more valuable than your

articles, pardon me if I prefer taking the former instead of the latter."

Mr. Brown forced a smile—"Well, Sir, it's very well, very well indeed. You will not go out before two o'clock? and at that time I shall call upon you respecting the commission you have favoured me with."

"I will await you," said Clarence; and he bowed Mr. Brown out of the room.

"Now, really," said Linden to himself, as he paced the narrow limits of his apartment, I do not well see what better plan I can pursue—but let me well consider what is my ultimate object. A high step in the world's ladder!—how is this to be obtained? First, by the regular method of professions—but what profession should I adopt?—the church is incompatible with my object—the army and navy with my means. Next come the irregular methods of

adventure and enterprize—such as marriage with a fortune"—here he paused, and looked at the glass—"the speculation of a political pamphlet, or an ode to the minister—attendance on some dying miser of my own name, without a relation in the world—or, in short, any other mode of making money, that may decently offer itself. Now, situated as I am, without a friend in this great city, I might as well purchase my experience at as cheap a rate, and in as brief a time as possible, nor do I see any plan of doing so more promising than that proposed by Mr. Brown."

These and such like reflections, joined to the inspiriting pages of the "Newgate Calendar," and "The Covent Garden Magazine," two works which Clarence dragged from their concealment under a black tea-tray, afforded him ample occupation till the hour of two, punctual to which time Mr. Morris Brown returned.

"Well, Sir," said Clarence, "what is your report?"

The friend of the late Lady W. wiped his brow and gave three long sighs before he replied. "A long walk, Sir—a very long walk I have had; but I have succeeded. No thanks, Sir—no thanks—the lady, a most charming, delightful, amiable woman, will receive you with pleasure—you will have the use of a back parlour (as I said) all the morning, and a beautiful little bed-room entirely to yourself—think of that, Sir. You will have an egg for breakfast, and you will dine with the family at three o'clock: quite fashionable hours you see, Sir."

"And the terms?" said Linden, impatiently.

"Why, Sir," replied Mr. Brown, "the lady was too genteel to talk to me about them—you had better walk with me to her house and see if you cannot yourself agree with her."

"I will," said Clarence. "Will you wait here till I have dressed?"

Mr. Brown bowed his assent.

"I might as well," thought Clarence, as he ascended to his bed-room, "inquire into the character of this gentleman, to whose good offices I am so rashly entrusting myself." He rang his bell—the chambermaid appeared, and was dismissed for the waiter. The character was soon asked, and soon given. For our reader's sake we will somewhat enlarge upon it.

Mr. Morris Brown originally came into the world with the simple appellation of Moses—a name which his father—honest man—had, as the Minories can still testify, honourably borne before him. Scarcely, however, had the little Moses obtained the age of five, when his father, for causes best known to himself, became a Christian. Somehow or other there is a most potent connection between the purse and the

conscience, and accordingly the blessings of heaven descended in golden showers upon the proselyte. "I shall die worth a plum," said Moses the elder, (who had taken unto himself the Christian cognomen of Brown,) "I shall die worth a plum," repeated he, as he went one fine morning to speculate at the Exchange. A change of news, sharp and unexpected as a change of wind, lowered the stocks and blighted the plum. Mr. Brown was in the Gazette that week, and his wife in weeds for him the next. He left behind him, besides the said wife, several debts, and his son Moses. Beggared by the former, our widow took a small shop in Wardour-street to support the latter. Patient, but enterprising—cautious of risking pounds—indefatigable in raising pence, the little Moses inherited the propensities of his Hebrew ancestors; and though not so capable as his immediate progenitor of making a fortune, he was at least far

less likely to lose one. In spite, however, of all the industry, both of mother and son, the gains of the shop were but scanty: to increase them capital was required, and all Mr. Moses Brown's capital lay in his brain. "It is a bad foundation," said the mother, with a sigh. "Not at all!" said the son, and leaving the shop he turned broker. Now a broker is a man who makes an income out of other people's funds—a gleaner of stray extravagances; and by doing the public the honour of living upon them, may fairly be termed a little sort of state minister in his way. What with haunting sales, hawking china, selling the curiosities of one old lady, and purchasing the same for another, Mr. Brown managed to enjoy a very comfortable existence. Great pains and small gains will at last invert their antitheses, and make little trouble and great profit: so that by the time Mr. Brown had attained his fortieth year, the petty shop had

become a large warehouse; and if the worthy Moses, now christianized into Morris, was not so sanguine as his father in the gathering of plums, he had been at least as fortunate in the collecting of windfalls. To say truth, the Abigail of the defunct Lady Waddilove had been no unprofitable helpmate to our broker. As ingenious as benevolent, she was the owner of certain rooms of great resort in the neighbourhood of St. James's—rooms where caps and appointments were made better than any where else—and where credit was given, and character lost, upon terms equally advantageous to the accommodating Mr. Brown.

Meanwhile her husband, continuing through liking what he had begun through necessity, slackened not his industry in augmenting his fortune; on the contrary, the latter was but a keener incentive to the former—as the glutton only sharpened by luncheon his appetite for

dinner. Still was Mr. Brown the very Alcibiades of brokers—the universal genius—suiting every man to his humour. Business, of whatever description, from the purchase of a borough to that of a brooch, was alike the object of Mr. Brown's most zealous pursuit: taverns, where country cousins put up—rustic habitations, where ancient maidens resided—auction, or barter—city, or hamlet—all were the same to that enterprising spirit, which made out of every acquaintance a commission, and by ministering to the wants of others, satisfied its own. Sagacious and acute, he perceived the value of eccentricity in covering design; and found, by experience, that whatever can be laughed at as odd, will be gravely considered as harmless. Several of the broker's peculiarities were, therefore, more artificial than natural; and many were the sly bargains which he smuggled into effect, under the comfortable cloak of singu-

larity. No wonder then that the crafty Morris grew gradually in repute as a person of infinite utility and excellent qualifications; or that the penetrating friends of his deceased sire bowed to the thriving itinerant, with a respect which they denied to many in loftier professions and more general esteem.

CHAPTER IX.

"Trust me you have an exceeding fine lodging here—very neat and private."

BEN JONSON.

It was a tolerably long walk to the abode of which the worthy broker spoke in such high terms of commendation. At length, at the suburbs towards Paddington, Mr. Brown stopped at a very small house: it stood rather retired from its surrounding neighbours, which were of a loftier and more pretending aspect than itself, and in its awkward shape and pitiful bashfulness, looked exceedingly like a schoolboy find-

ing himself for the first time in a *grown-up* party, and shrinking with all possible expedition into the obscurest corner he can discover. Passing through a sort of garden, in which a spot of grass lay in the embraces of a stripe of gravel, Mr. Brown knocked upon a very bright knocker at a very new door. The latter was opened, and a footboy appeared.

"Is Mrs. Copperas within?" asked the broker.

"Yees!" said the boy.

"Shew this gentleman and myself up stairs," resumed Brown.

"Yees!" reiterated the lackey.

Up a singularly narrow staircase, into a singularly diminutive drawing-room, Clarence and his guide were ushered. There, seated on a little chair by a little work-table, with one foot on a little stool, and one hand on a little book, was a little—very little lady.

"This is the young gentleman," said Mr. Brown; and Clarence bowed low, in token of the introduction.

The lady returned the salutation with an affected bend, and said, in a mincing and grotesquely subdued tone—"You are desirous, Sir, of entering into the bosom of my family? We possess accommodations of a most elegant description—accustomed to the genteelest circles—enjoying the pure breezes of the Highgate hills—and presenting to any guest we may receive, the attractions of a home rather than of a lodging, you will find our retreat no less eligible than unique. You are, I presume, Sir, in some profession—some city avocation—or—or trade?"

Clarence's cheek burnt—but he checked the haughty reply rising to his lips.

"I have the misfortune," said he, smiling, "to belong to no profession."

The lady looked hard at the speaker, and then at the broker. With common people, to belong to no profession, is for a poor man to be of no respectability.

"The most unexceptionable references will be given—and *required*," resumed Mrs. Copperas.

"Certainly," said Mr. Brown, "certainly, the gentleman is a relation of Mrs. Minden, a *very* old customer of mine."

"In that case," said Mrs. Copperas, "the affair is settled:" and rising, she rung the bell, and ordered the footboy, whom she addressed by the grandiloquent name of *De Warens*, to shew the gentleman the apartments. While Clarence was occupied in surveying the luxuries of a box at the top of the house, called a bed-chamber, which seemed just large and just hot enough for a chrysalis, and a corresponding box

below, termed the back parlour, which would certainly *not* have been large enough for the said chrysalis, when turned into a butterfly. Mr. Morris Brown, after duly expatiating on the merits of Clarence, proceeded to speak of the terms; these were soon settled, for Clarence was yielding, and the lady not above three times as extortionate as she ought to have been.

Before Linden left the house, the bargain was concluded. That night his trunks were removed to his new abode, and having with incredible difficulty been squeezed into the bedroom, Clarence surveyed them with the same astonishment with which the virtuoso beheld the flies in amber—

> "Not that the things were either rich or rare,
> *He* wondered *how the devil they got there!*"

CHAPTER X.

"Such scenes had tempered with a pensive grace,
The maiden lustre of that faultless face;
Had hung a sad and dreamlike spell upon
The gliding music of her silver tone,
And shaded the soft soul which loved to lie
In the deep pathos of that volumed eye."

The Rebel.

"The love thus kindled between them was of no common or calculating nature; it was vigorous and delicious, and at times so suddenly intense as to appear to their young hearts for a moment or so, with almost an awful character."

INESILLA.

WE have now to wave our wand of office, and conjure up new scenes and new persons. Figure to yourself a small chamber, in a remote wing of a large and noble mansion—the walls were covered with sketches, whose extreme delicacy

of outline and colouring told that it was from a female hand that they derived their existence; a few shelves filled with books supported vases of flowers, whose bright hues and fragrant odour gratefully repaid, while they testified, the attention daily lavished upon them. A harp stood neglected at the farther end of the room, and just above hung the slender prison of one of those golden wanderers from the Canary Isles, which bear to our colder land some of the gentlest music of their skies and zephyrs. The window, reaching to the ground, was open, and looked through the clusters of jessamine and honeysuckle which surrounded the low veranda beyond, upon thick and frequent copses of blossoming shrubs, redolent of spring, and sparkling in the sunny tears of a May shower, which had only just wept itself away. Embosomed in these little groves lay plots of "prodigal flowers," contrasted and girdled with the

freshest and greenest turf which ever wooed the nightly dances of the fairies; and afar off, through one artful opening, the eye caught the glittering wanderings of water, on whose light and smiles the universal happiness of the young year seemed reflected.

But in that chamber, heedless of all around, and cold to the joy with which every thing else, equally youthful, beautiful, and innocent, seemed breathing and inspired, sat a very young and lovely female. Her cheek leant upon her hand, and large tears flowed fast and burningly over the small and delicate fingers. The comb that had confined her tresses lay at her feet, and the high dress which concealed her swelling breast had been loosened, to give vent to the suffocating and indignant throbbings which had rebelled against its cincture—all appeared to announce that bitterness of grief when the mind, as it were, wreaks its scorn upon the body in

its contempt for external seemings, and to proclaim that the present more subdued and softened sorrow had only succeeded to a burst far less quiet and controuled. Woe to those who eat the bread of dependance—their tears are wrung from the inmost sources of the heart!

Isabel St. Leger was the only child of a captain in the army, who died in her infancy; her mother had survived him only a few months: and to the reluctant care and cold affections of a distant and wealthy relation of the same name, the warm-hearted and pennyless orphan was consigned. Major-General Cornelius St. Leger, whose riches had been purchased in India at the price of his constitution, was of a temper as hot as his curries, and he wreaked it the more unsparingly on his ward, because the superior ill-temper of his maiden sister had prevented his giving vent to it upon her. That sister, Miss Diana St. Leger, was a meagre

gentlewoman of about six feet high; and her voice was as high and as sharp as herself. Long in awe of her brother, she rejoiced at heart to find some one whom she had such right and reason to make in awe of herself; and from the age of four to that of seventeen, Isabel suffered every insult and every degradation which could be inflicted upon her by the tyranny of her two *protectors*. Her spirit, however, was far from being broken by the rude shocks it received; on the contrary, her mind, gentleness itself to the kind, rose indignantly against the unjust. It was true that the sense of wrong broke not forth audibly; for, though susceptible, Isabel was meek, and her pride was concealed by the outward softness and feminacy of her temper; but she stole away from those who had wounded her heart, or trampled upon its feelings, and nourished with secret but passionate tears the memory of the

harshness or injustice she had endured. Yet was she not vindictive—her resentment was a noble, not a debasing feeling: once, when she was yet a child, Miss Diana was attacked with a fever of the most malignant and infectious kind; her brother—what East Indian general would not have done the same?—loved himself far too well to risk his safety by attending his sister; the servants were too happy to wreak their hatred under the pretence of obeying their fears: they consequently followed the example of their master; and Miss Diana St. Leger might have gone down to her ancestors, "unwept, unhonoured, and unsung," if Isabel had not volunteered and enforced her attendance. Hour after hour, her fairy form flitted around the sick chamber, or sate mute and breathless by the feverish bed; she had neither fear for contagion nor bitterness for past oppression; every thing vanished beneath the one hope of serving,

the one gratification of feeling herself, in the wide waste of creation, not utterly without use, as she had been hitherto without friends.

Miss St. Leger recovered. "For your recovery, in the first place," said the doctor, "you will thank Heaven; in the second, you will thank your young relation," and for several days the convalescent did overwhelm the happy Isabel with her praises and caresses. But this change lasted not long: the chaste Diana had been too spoiled by the prosperity of many years, for the sickness of a single month to effect much good in her disposition. Her old habits were soon resumed, and though it is probable that her *heart* was in reality softened towards the poor Isabel, that softening by no means extended to her temper. In truth, perhaps the brother and sister were not without affection for one so beautiful and good, but they had been torturing slaves all their lives, and their affection was, and

could be, but that of a taskmaster or a planter.

But Isabel was the only relation that ever appeared within their walls, and among the guests, with whom the luxurious mansion was crowded, she passed no less for the heiress than the dependant; to her, therefore, was offered the homage of many lips and hearts, and if her pride was perpetually galled, and her feelings insulted in private, her vanity (had that equalled her pride, and her feelings in its susceptibility) would in no slight measure have recompenced her in public. Unhappily, however, her vanity was the least prominent quality she possessed; and she turned with scorn, rather than pleasure, from the compliments and adulation which her penetration detected, while her heart despised.

Perhaps, indeed, she found some gratification in indulging that pride to strangers which was checked all proper and dignified exercise

to relations; and the indifference of her manners, (graceful as they were,) the coldness of her brilliant eye, and the disdainful expression of her young lips, repelled at last the admiration her beauty had attracted, and excited rather pity towards her guardians for the supposed severity of *her* temper, than towards herself for the acerbity of theirs. Yet did she bear within her a deep fund of buried tenderness, and a mine of girlish and enthusiastic romance; dangerous gifts to one so situated, which, while they gave to her secret moments of solitude, a powerful, but vague attraction, probably only prepared for her future years, the snare which might betray them into error, or the delusion which would colour them with regret.

Among those whom the ostentatious hospitality of General St. Leger attracted to his house, was one of very different character and pretensions to the rest. Formed to be unpopular

with the generality of men, the very qualities that made him so, were those which principally fascinate the higher description of women: of ancient birth, which rendered still more displeasing the pride and coldness of his mien; of talents peculiarly framed to attract interest as well as esteem; of a deep and somewhat morbid melancholy, which, while it turned from ordinary ties, inclined yearningly towards passionate affections; of a temper, where romance was only concealed from the many, to become more seducing to the few; unsocial, but benevolent; disliked, but respected; of the austerest demeanour, but of passions the most fervid, though the most carefully concealed:—this man united within himself all that repels the common mass of his species, and all that irresistibly wins and fascinates the rare and romantic few. To these qualities were added, an external mien and person of that high and commanding order, which

men mistake for arrogance and pretension, and women overrate in proportion to its contrast to their own. Something of mystery there was in the commencement of the deep and eventful love which took place between this person and Isabel, which I have never been able to learn: whatever it was, it seemed to expedite and heighten the ordinary progress of love; and when in the dim twilight, beneath the first melancholy smile of the earliest star, their hearts opened audibly to each other, that confession had been made silently long since, and registered in the inmost recesses of the soul.

But their passion, which began in prosperity, was soon darkened. Whether from the hauteur of Isabel's lover, always so displeasing in men of birth to those who do not possess it, or from the desire of retaining about him an object which he could torment and tyrannize over, no sooner did the general discover the attachment

of his young relation, than he peremptorily forbade its indulgence, and assumed so insolent and overbearing an air towards the lover, that the latter felt he could no longer repeat his visits to, or even continue his acquaintance with the nabob.

To add to these adverse circumstances, a relation of the lover, from whom his expectations had been large, was so enraged, not only at the insult his cousin had received, but at the very idea of his forming an alliance with one in so dependent a situation, and connected with such new blood, as Isabel St. Leger, that with that arrogance which relations, however distant, think themselves authorized to assume, he forbade his cousin, upon pain of forfeiture of favour and fortune, ever to renew his overtures of attachment. The one thus addressed was not of a temper patiently to submit to such threats; he answered them with disdain, and

the breach, so dangerous to his pecuniary interest, was already begun.

So far had the history of our lover proceeded at the time in which I have introduced Isabel to the reader, and described to him the chamber to which, in all her troubles and humiliations, she was accustomed to fly, as to a sad but still unviolated sanctuary of retreat.

The quiet of this asylum was first broken by a slight rustling among the leaves; but Isabel's back was turned towards the window, and in the engrossment of her feelings she heard it not. The thick copse that darkened the left side of the veranda was pierced, and a man passed within the covered space, and stood still and silent before the window, intently gazing upon the figure which (though the face was turned from him,) betrayed in its proportions, that beauty which, in his eyes, had neither an equal nor a fault.

The figure of the stranger, though not very tall, was above the ordinary height, and gracefully rather than robustly formed. He was dressed in the darkest colours and the simplest fashion, which rendered yet more striking the nobleness of his mien, as well as the clear and almost delicate paleness of his complexion; his features were finely and accurately chiselled; and had not ill health, long travel, or severe thought deepened too much the lines of the countenance, and sharpened its contour, the classic perfection of those features would have rendered him undeniably and even eminently handsome: as it was, the paleness, and the somewhat worn character of his face, joined to an expression, at first glance, rather haughty and repellant, made him lose in physical what he certainly gained in intellectual beauty. His eyes were large, deep, and melancholy, and had the hat which now hung over his brow been

removed, it would have displayed a forehead of remarkable boldness and power; not perhaps so observable for its height as for its breadth, and for that advancing and grand formation, so seldom seen in modern countenances, but which formed perhaps the noblest secret of antient sculpture.

Altogether, the face was cast in a rare and intellectual mould, and if wanting in those more luxuriant attractions common to the age of the stranger, who could scarcely have attained his twenty-sixth year, it betokened, at least, that predominance of mind over body, which, in some eyes, is the most requisite characteristic of masculine beauty.

With a soft and noiseless step, the stranger moved from his station without the window, and entering the room, stole towards the spot on which Isabel was sitting. He leant over her chair, and his eye rested upon his own picture,

and a letter in his own writing, over which the tears of the young orphan flowed fast. One fair small hand hung listless by her side; its slender fingers were girded by no ornaments but a single and simple ring of hair—it had been given to her by him.

One moment of agitated happiness for one—of unconscious and continued sadness for the other—

" 'Tis past—her lover's at her feet."

And what indeed " was to them the world beside, with all its changes of time and tide?" Joy—hope—all blissful and bright sensations, lay mingled, like meeting waters, in one sunny stream of heartfelt and unfathomable enjoyment—but this passed away, and the remembrance of bitterness and evil succeeded.

" Oh, Algernon!" said Isabel, in a low voice, " is this your promise?"

"Believe me," said Mordaunt, for it was indeed he, "I struggled long with my feelings, but in vain; and, for both our sakes, I rejoice at the conquest they obtained. I listened only to a deceitful delusion when I imagined I was obeying the dictates of reason. Ah, dearest, why should we part for the sake of dubious and distant evils, when the misery of absence is the most certain, the most unceasing evil we can endure?"

"For your sake, and therefore for mine!" interrupted Isabel, struggling with her tears. "I am a beggar, and an outcast. You must not link your fate with mine. I could bear, God knows how willingly, poverty and all its evils *for* you and *with* you; but I cannot *bring* them upon you."

"Nor will you," said Mordaunt, passionately, as he covered the hand he held with his burning kisses. "Have I not enough for both of us?

It is my love, not poverty, that I beseech you to share."

"No! Algernon, you cannot deceive me: your own estate will be torn from you by the law: if you marry me, your cousin will not assist you: I, you know too well, can command nothing; and I shall see you, for whom in my fond and bright dreams I have presaged every thing great and exalted, buried in an obscurity from which your talents can never rise, and suffering the pangs of poverty, and dependance, and humiliation like my own—and—and—I—should be the wretch who caused you all. Never, Algernon, never!—I love you too—too well!"

But the effort which wrung forth the determination of the tone in which these words were uttered, was too strong to endure; and as the full desolation of her despair crowded fast and dark upon the orphan's mind, she sunk back upon

her chair in very sickness of soul, nor heeded, in her unconscious misery, that her hand was yet clasped by her lover, and that her head drooped upon his bosom.

"Isabel," he said, in the low, sweet tone which, to her ear, seemed the concentration of all earthly music—"Isabel—look up—my own—my beloved—look up and hear me. Perhaps you say truly when you tell me that the possessions of my house shall melt away from me, and that my relation will not offer to me the precarious bounty, which, even if he did, I would reject; but, dearest, are there not a thousand paths open to me—the law—the state—the army?—You are silent, Isabel—speak!"

Isabel did not reply, but the soft eyes which rested upon his, told, in their despondency, how little she was excited by the arguments he urged.

"Besides," he continued, "we know not yet

whether the law may not decide in my favour—at all events years may pass before the judgment is given—those years make the prime and verdure of our lives—let us not waste them in mourning over blighted hopes and severed hearts—let us snatch what happiness is yet in our power, nor anticipate, while the heavens are still bright above us, the burthen of the thunder or the cloud."

Isabel was one of the least selfish, and most devoted of human beings, yet she must be forgiven if at that moment her resolution faltered, and the overpowering thought of being in reality *his* for ever, flashed upon her mind. It passed from her the moment it was formed, and rising from a situation in which the touch of that dear hand, and the breath of those wooing lips endangered the virtue, and weakened the strength of her resolves, she withdrew herself from his grasp, and while she averted her eyes, which

dared not encounter his, she said in a low but firm voice—

"It is in vain, Algernon; it is in vain. I *can* be to you nothing but a blight or burthen, nothing but a source of privation and bitterness. Think you that I *will* be this?—no, I will not darken your fair hopes, and impede your reasonable ambition. Go, (and here her voice faltered for a moment, but soon recovered its tone,) go, Algernon, *dear* Algernon; and if my foolish heart will not ask you to think of me no more, I can at least implore you to think of me only as one who would die, rather than cost you a moment of that poverty and debasement whose bitterness she has felt herself, and who for that very reason, tears herself away from you for ever."

"Stay, Isabel, stay!" cried Mordaunt, as he caught hold of her robe, ere she had yet left the room, "give me but one word more, and

you shall leave me. Say, that if I can create for myself a new source of independence; if I can carve out a road where the ambition you erroneously impute to me can be gratified, as well as the more moderate wishes our station has made natural to us to form—say, that if I do this, I may permit myself to hope—say, that *when* I have done it, I may claim you as my own!"

Isabel paused, and turned once more her face towards his own. Her lips moved, and though the words died within her heart, yet Mordaunt read well their import in the blushing cheek and the heaving bosom, and the lips which one ray of hope and comfort was sufficient to kindle into smiles. He gazed, and all obstacles, all difficulties disappeared; the gulf of time seemed passed, and he felt as if already he had earned and won his reward.

He approached her yet nearer; one kiss on

those lips, one pressure of that thrilling hand, one long, last, yearning embrace of that shrinking and trembling form—and then, as the door closed upon his view, he felt that the sunshine of nature had passed away, and that in the midst of the laughing and peopled earth, *he* stood in darkness and alone.

CHAPTER XI.

"The middle classes are of all the most free from the vices of conduct, and the most degraded by the meannesses of character."

LETTERS OF STEPHEN MONTAGUE.

WE return to Clarence, nor shall we make any excuse for portraying, though in a brief and single sketch, the manners of his host and hostess. Despite the imbecile cant of the day, which affects disdain for the description of mankind as they are, which censures the delineation of society, when polished, as flippant, and when coarse, as revolting; we shall in each, as the vicissitudes of our story bring them before our

view, follow experience in the pursuit of truth. The manners of the time, the characters which, from peculiar constitutions of society, derive peculiarities of distinction, become the natural though, we confess, not the noblest province of the novelist. The *noblest* sphere of his art, is to add to exterior circumstances, which vary with every age, a painting of that internal world which in every age is the same; and besides describing the fashion and the vestment, to stamp upon his portraits something of the character of the soul.

We then left Clarence safely deposited in his little lodgings. Whether from the heat of his apartment, or the restlessness a migration of beds produces in certain constitutions, his sleep that night was as little as his couch. He rose early and descended to the drawing-room; Mr. de Warens, the nobly appellatived footboy, was laying the breakfast cloth. From three painted shelves

which constituted the library of "Copperas Bower," as its owners gracefully called it, Clarence took down a book very prettily bound; it was "Poems, by a Nobleman." No sooner had he read two pages, than he did exactly what the reader would have done, and restored the volume to its place again. He then drew his chair towards the window, and wistfully eyed sundry antient nursery maids, who were leading their infant charges to the "fresh fields, and pastures new," of what is now the Regent's Park.

In about an hour, Mrs. Copperas descended, and mutual compliments were exchanged; to her succeeded Mr. Copperas, who was well scolded for his laziness; and to them, Master Adolphus Copperas, who was also chidingly termed, a naughty darling, for the same offence. Now then Mrs. Copperas prepared the tea, which she did in the approved method, adopted by all ladies to whom economy is dearer than

renown—viz. the least possible quantity of the *soi-disant* Chinese plant was first sprinkled by the least possible quantity of hot water; after this mixture had become as black and as bitter as it could possibly be, without any adjunct from the apothecary's skill, it was suddenly drenched with a copious diffusion, and as suddenly poured forth, weak, washy, and abominable, into four cups, severally appertaining unto the four partakers of the matutinal nectar.

Then the conversation began to flow. Mrs. Copperas was a fine lady, and a sentimentalist—very observant of the little niceties of phrase and manner. Mr. Copperas was a stock-jobber, and a wit, loved a good hit in each capacity, was very round, very short, and very much like a John Dory, and saw in the features and mind of the little Copperas, the exact representative of himself.

"Adolphus, my love," said Mrs. Copperas,

"mind what I told you, and sit upright.—Mr. Linden, will you allow me to cut you a *leetle* piece of this roll?"

"Thank you," said Clarence, "I will trouble you rather for the whole of it."

Conceive Mrs. Copperas's dismay! from that moment she saw herself eaten out of house and home; besides, as she afterwards observed to her friend Miss Barbara York, "the vulgarity of such an amazing appetite!"

"Any commands in the city, Mr. Linden?" asked the husband: "a coach will pass by our door in a few minutes—must be on 'Change in half-an-hour. Come, my love, another cup of tea—make haste—I have scarcely a moment to take *my fare* for the inside, before coachee takes *his* for the outside. Ha! ha! ha! Mr Linden."

"Lord, Mr. Copperas," said his helpmate, "how can you be so silly? setting such an example to your son, too—never mind him, Adol-

phus, my love—fie, child, a'n't you ashamed of yourself?—never put the spoon in your cup till you have done tea: I must really send you to school, to learn manners.—We have a very pretty little collection of books here, Mr. Linden, if you would like to read an hour or two after breakfast—child, take your hands out of your pockets—all the best English classics, I believe—Telemachus, and Young's Night Thoughts, and Joseph Andrews, and The Spectator, and Pope's Iliad, and Creech's Lucretius; but you will look over them yourself! This is Liberty Hall, as well as Copperas Bower, Mr. Linden!"

"Well, my love," said the stock-jobber, "I believe I must be off. Here, Tom—Tom—(Mr. de Warens had just entered the room with some more hot water, to weaken still farther "the poor remains of what was once" the tea)—Tom, just run out and stop the coach, it will be by in five minutes."

"Have not I prayed, and besought you, many

and many a time, Mr. Copperas," said the lady rebukingly, "not to call De Warens by his christian name? Don't you know, that all people in genteel life, who only keep one servant, invariably call him by his surname, as if he were the butler you know?"

"Now, that is too good, my love," said Copperas. "I will call poor Tom by any surname you please, but I really can't pass him off for a butler! Ha—ha—ha—you must excuse me there, my love"

"And pray, why not, Mr. Copperas? I have known many a butler bungle more at a cork than he does; and pray tell me, who did you ever see wait better at dinner?"

"He wait at dinner, my love! it is not he who waits."

"Who then, Mr. Copperas?"

"Why *we*, my love—it's we who wait at dinner—but that's the cook's fault, not his."

"Pshaw, Mr. Copperas—Adolphus, my love, sit upright, darling."

Here De Warens cried from the bottom of the stairs—

"Measter, the coach be coming up."

"There won't be room for it to turn then," said the facetious Mr. Copperas, looking round the apartment, as if he took the words literally. "What coach is it, boy?"

Now that was not the age in which coaches scoured the city every half-hour, and Mr. Copperas knew the name of the coach, as well as he knew his own.

"It be the Swallow coach, Sir."

"Oh! very well: then since I have swallowed in the roll, I will now roll in the Swallow—ha—ha—ha!—Good by, Mr. Linden."

No sooner had the witty stock-jobber left the room, than Mrs. Copperas seemed to expand into a new existence. "My husband, Sir,"

said she, apologetically, "is *so* odd, but he's an excellent sterling character; and that, you know, Mr. Linden, tells more in domestic life, than all the shining qualities which captivate the fancy. I am sure, Mr. Linden, that the moralist is right in admonishing us to prefer the gold to the tinsel. I have now been married some years, and every year seems happier than the last; but then, Mr. Linden, it is such pleasure to contemplate the growing graces of the sweet pledge of our mutual love—Adolphus, my dear, keep your feet still, and take your hands out of your pockets!"

A short pause ensued.

"We see a great deal of company," said Mrs. Copperas, pompously, "and of the very best description. Sometimes we are favoured by the society of the great Mr. Talbot, a gentleman of immense fortune, and quite the courtier; he is, it is true, a little eccentric in his dress; but

then he was a celebrated beau in his young days. He is our next neighbour: you can see his house out of the window, just across the garden—there! We have also, sometimes, our humble board graced by a very elegant friend of mine, Miss Barbara York, a lady of very high connexions, her first cousin was a lord mayor—Adolphus, my dear, what are you about! Well, Mr. Linden, you will find your retreat quite undisturbed; I must go about the household affairs; not that I do any thing more than superintend, you know, Sir; but I think no lady should be above consulting her husband's interests—that's what I call true old English conjugal affection. Come, Adolphus, my dear."

And Clarence was now alone. "I fear," thought he, "that I shall get on very indifferently with these people. Taught by books, not experience, I fondly imagined that there were very few to whom I could not suit myself; but

I have yet to learn that there are certain vulgarities, which ask long familiarity with their cause and effect, rightly to understand and patiently to endure. The outward coarseness of the lowest orders, the *mental grossièreté* of the highest, I can readily suppose it easy to forgive, for the former does not offend one's feelings, nor the latter one's habits; but this base, pretending, noisy, scarlet vulgarity of the middle ranks, which has all the rudeness of its inferiors, with all the arrogance and heartlessness of its betters—this pounds and pence patchwork, of the worst and most tawdry shreds and rags of manners, is alike sickening to one's love of human nature, and one's refinement of taste. But it will not do for me to be misanthropical, and (as Dr. Latinas was wont to say,) the great merit of philosophy, when it cannot *command* circumstances, is to *reconcile* us to them."

CHAPTER XII.

"A retired beau is one of the most instructive spectacles in the world."

STEPHEN MONTAGUE.

It was quite true that Mrs. Copperas saw a great deal of company, for, at a certain charge, upon certain days, any individual might have the honour of sharing her family repast; and many of various callings, though chiefly in commercial life, met at her miscellaneous board. Clarence must, indeed, have been difficult to please, or obtuse of observation, if in the variety of her guests, he had not found something either

to interest or amuse him. Heavens! what a motley group were accustomed, twice in the week, to assemble there! the little dining parlour seemed a human oven; and it must be owned that Clarence was no slight magnet of attraction to the female part of the guests. Mrs. Copperas's bosom friend in especial, the accomplished Miss Barbara York, darted the most tender glances on the handsome young stranger; but whether or no a nose remarkably prominent and long, prevented the glances from taking full effect, it is certain that Clarence seldom repaid them with that affectionate ardour, which Miss Barbara York had ventured to anticipate. The only persons indeed, for whom he felt any sympathetic attraction, were of the same sex as himself; the one was Mr. Talbot, the old gentleman whom Mrs. Copperas had described as the perfect courtier, the other, a young artist of the name of Warner. Talbot, to Clarence's great astonishment,

(for Mrs. Copperas's eulogy had prepared him for something eminently displeasing,) was a man of birth, fortune, and manners peculiarly graceful and attractive. It is true, however, that despite of his vicinity, and Mrs. Copperas's urgent solicitations, he very seldom honoured her with his company, and he always cautiously sent over his servant in the morning, to inquire the names and number of her expected guests: nor was he ever known to share the plenteous board of the stock-jobber's lady, whenever any other partaker of its dainties, save Clarence and the young artist, were present. The latter, the old gentleman really liked: and as for one truly well born, and well bred, there is no vulgarity except in the mind, the slender means, obscure birth, and struggling profession of Warner, were circumstances which, as they increased the merit of a gentle manner and a fine mind, spake rather in his favour than the reverse. As for

Clarence, no sooner had Talbot seen him, than he expressed the highest prepossession in his conversation and appearance; and indeed, there was in Talbot's tastes so strong a bias to aristocratic externals, that Clarence's air alone would have been sufficient to win the good graces of a man who had, perhaps, more than any courtier of his time, cultivated the arts of manner, and the secrets of address.

"You will call upon me soon?" said he to Clarence, when after dining one day alone with the Copperases and their inmate, he rose to return home. And Clarence, delighted with the urbanity and liveliness of his new acquaintance, readily promised that he would.

Accordingly the next day, Clarence called upon Mr. Talbot. The house, as Mrs. Copperas had before said, adjoined her own, and was only separated from it by a garden. It was a dull mansion of brick, which had disdained

the frippery of paint and white-washing, and had indeed been built many years previous to the erection of the modern habitations which surrounded it. It was, therefore, as a consequence of this priority of birth, more sombre than the rest, and had a peculiarly forlorn and solitary look. As Clarence approached the door, he was struck with the size of the house—it was of very considerable extent, and in the more favourable situations of London, would have passed for a very desirable and spacious tenement. An old man, whose accurate precision of dress bespoke the tastes of the master, opened the door, and after ushering Clarence through two long, and to his surprise, almost splendidly furnished rooms, led him into a third, where, seated at a small writing-table, he found Mr. Talbot. That person, one whom Clarence then little thought would hereafter exercise no small influence over his fate, was of

a figure and countenance well worthy the notice of a description.

His own hair, quite white, was carefully and artificially curled, and gave a Grecian cast to features, whose original delicacy, and exact, though small proportions, not even age could destroy. His eyes were large, black, and sparkled with a vivacity which would have been brilliant even in the youngest orbs; and his mouth, which was the best feature he possessed, developed teeth, white and even as rows of ivory. Small and very slender in stature, nothing could exceed the elegance and ease of his motions and air; and his dress, though singularly rich in its materials, eccentric in its fashion, and, from its evident study, unseemly to his years, served nevertheless to render rather venerable than ridiculous, a mien which could almost have carried off any absurdity, and which the fashion of the garb peculiarly became.

The *tout ensemble* was certainly that of a man who was still vain of his exterior, and conscious of its effect; and it was as certainly impossible to converse with Mr. Talbot for five minutes, without merging every less respectful association in the magical fascination of his manner.

"I thank you, Mr. Linden," said Talbot, rising, "for your accepting so readily an old man's invitation. If I have felt pleasure at discovering that we were to be neighbours, you may judge what that pleasure is to-day at finding you my visitor."

Clarence, who, to do him justice, was always ready at returning a fine speech, replied in a similar strain, and the conversation flowed on agreeably enough. There was more than a moderate collection of books in the room, and this circumstance led Clarence to allude to literary subjects; these Mr. Talbot took up with avidity, and touched with a light but graceful

criticism upon many of the then modern, and some of the older writers. He seemed delighted to find himself understood and appreciated by Clarence, and every moment of Linden's visit served to ripen their acquaintance into intimacy. At length they talked upon Copperas Bower and its inmates.

"You will find your host and hostess," said the old gentleman, "certainly of a different order to the persons with whom it is easy to see you have associated; but, at your happy age, a year or two may be very well thrown away upon observing the manners and customs of those whom, in later life, you may often be called upon to conciliate, or perhaps to control. Believe the word of an old beau, that that man will never be a perfect gentleman who lives only with gentlemen. To be a man of the world, we must view that world in every grade, and in every perspective. In short, the most practical

art of wisdom, is that which extracts from things the very quality they least appear to possess; and the actor in the world, like the actor on the stage, should find 'a basket hilted sword very convenient to carry milk in.'* As for me, I have survived my relations and friends. I cannot keep late hours, nor adhere to the unhealthy customs of good society; nor do I think that, to a man of my age and habits, any remuneration would adequately repay the sacrifice of health or comfort. I am, therefore, well content to sink into a hermitage in an obscure corner of this great town, and only occasionally to revive my 'past remembrances of higher state,' by admitting a few old acquaintances to drink my bachelor's tea, and talk over the news of the day. Hence, you see, Mr. Linden, I pick up two or three novel anecdotes of state and scandal, and maintain my importance at

* See the witty inventory of a player's goods, in the Tatler.

Copperas Bower, by retailing them second hand. Now that you are one of the inmates of that abode, I shall be more frequently its guest. By-the-by, I will let you into a secret: know that I am somewhat a lover of the marvellous, and like to indulge a little embellishing exaggeration in any place where there is no chance of finding me out. Mind, therefore, my dear Mr. Linden, that you take no ungenerous advantage of this confession; but suffer me, now and then, to tell my stories my own way, even when you think truth would require me to tell them in another."

"Certainly," said Clarence, laughing; "let us make an agreement: you shall tell your stories as you please, if you will grant me the same liberty in paying my compliments; and if I laugh aloud at the stories, you shall promise me not to laugh aloud at the compliments."

"It is a bond;" said Talbot; "and a very

fit exchange of service it is. By-the-by, it will be no bad problem in human nature to see who has the best of it: you shall pay your court by flattering the people present, and I mine, by abusing those absent. Now, in spite of your youth and curling locks, I will wager that I succeed the best; for in vanity there is so great a mixture of envy, that no compliment is like a judicious abuse—to enchant your acquaintance, ridicule his friends."

"Ah, Sir," said Clarence, "this opinion of yours is, I trust, a little in the French school, where brilliancy is more studied than truth, and where an ill opinion of our species always has the merit of passing for profound."

Talbot smiled, and shook his head. "My dear young friend," said he, "it is quite right that you who are coming into the world, should think well of it; and it is also quite right that I, who am going out of it, should console myself by trying to despise it. However, let me

tell you, my young friend, that he, whose opinion of mankind is not too elevated, will always be the most benevolent, because the most indulgent, to those errors incidental to human imperfection: to place our nature in too flattering a view, is only to court disappointment, and end in misanthropy. The man who sets out with expecting to find all his fellow creatures heroes of virtue, will conclude by condemning them as monsters of vice; and, on the contrary, the least exacting judge of actions will be the most lenient. If God, in his own perfection, did not see so many frailties in us, think you he would be so gracious to our virtues?"

"And yet," said Clarence, "we remark every day examples of the highest excellence."

"Yes," replied Talbot, "of the *highest*, but not of the most *constant*, excellence. He knows very little of the *cœur humain*, who imagines we cannot do a good action; but, alas! he knows

still less of it who supposes we can be always doing good actions. In exactly the same ratio we see every day the greatest crimes are committed; but we find no wretch so depraved as to be always committing crimes. Man cannot be perfect even in guilt. It has been beautifully observed, that the greatest proof of Shakspeare's wonderful knowledge of nature is, in the circumstance of his never having drawn a thoroughly unredeemed villain; they all have some touches of human feeling—even Lady Macbeth could not murder one who resembled her father."

In this manner Talbot and his young visitor conversed, till the latter, after a stay of unwarrantable length, rose to depart.

"Well," said Talbot, "if we now rightly understand each other, we shall be the best friends in the world. As we shall expect great things from each other sometimes, we will have no scruple of exacting a heroic sacrifice every now

and then: *par exemple*—I will ask you to punish yourself by an occasional *tête-à-tête* with an antient gentleman; and as we can also, by the same reasoning, pardon great faults in each other, if they are not often committed, so I will forgive you, with all my heart, whenever you refuse my invitations, if you do not refuse them often. And now farewell till we meet again."

It seemed singular, and almost unnatural to Linden, that a man like Talbot, of birth, fortune, and great fastidiousness of taste and temper, should have formed any sort of acquaintance, however slight and distant, with the facetious stock-jobber and his wife; but the fact is easily explained by a reference to that vanity which we shall see hereafter made the ruling passion of Talbot's nature. This vanity, which branching forth into a thousand eccentricities, displayed itself in the singularity of his dress, the studied yet graceful warmth of his manner, his attention

to the minutiæ of life, his desire craving and insatiate to receive from every one, however insignificant, his *obolum* of admiration;—this vanity once flattered by the obsequious homage it met from the wonder and reverence of the Copperases, reconciled his taste to the disgust it so frequently and necessarily conceived; and having in great measure resigned his former acquaintance, and wholly outlived his friends, he sought even in petty and polluted channels that vent for the desire of creating effect which was cut off from any more brilliant and enlarged egress.

There is no dilemma in which vanity cannot find an expedient to develope its form—no stream of circumstances in which its buoyant and light nature will not rise to float upon the surface. And its ingenuity is as fertile as that of the player who (his wardrobe allowing him no other method of playing the fop) could still exhibit the prevalent passion for distinction, by wearing stockings of different colours.

CHAPTER XIII.

> "Who dares
> Interpret then my life for me, as 'twere
> One of the undistinguishable many?"
> COLERIDGE'S *Wallenstein.*

THE first time Clarence had observed the young artist, he had taken a deep interest in his appearance. Pale, thin, undersized, and slightly deformed, the sanctifying mind still shed over the humble frame a spell more powerful than beauty. Absent in manner, melancholy in air, and never conversing except upon subjects upon which his imagination was excited, there was yet

a gentleness about him which could not fail to conciliate and prepossess; nor did Clarence omit any opportunity to soften his reserve, and wind himself into his more intimate acquaintance. Warner, the only support of an aged and infirm grandmother, (who had survived her immediate children,) was distantly related to Mrs. Copperas; and that lady, kind, though selfish, extended to him, with ostentatious benevolence, her favour and support. It is true, that she did not impoverish the young Adolphus to enrich her kinsman, but she allowed him a seat at her hospitable board, whenever it was not otherwise filled; and all that she demanded in return was a picture of herself, another of Mr. Copperas, a third of Master Adolphus, a fourth of the black cat, and from time to time sundry other lesser productions of his genius, of which, through the agency of Mr. Brown, she secretly disposed at a price that sufficiently remunerated her for what-

ever havoc the slender appetite of the young painter was able to effect.

By this arrangement, Clarence had many opportunities of gaining that intimacy with Warner which had become to him an object; and though the painter, naturally diffident and shy, was at first averse to, and even awed by, the ease, boldness, fluent speech and confident address of a man much younger than himself, yet at last he could not resist the being decoyed into familiarity, and the youthful pair gradually progressed from companionship into friendship. There was a striking, and perhaps a fine contrast between the two: Clarence was bold, frank, thoughtful, but thoughtful on objects of the world —not imaginative creations. Warner was timid, close, and abstractedly wrapped in ideal musings. Clarence, despite his great personal beauty, was the most simple and unaffected of human beings; the very defects of Warner, on the

score of person, produced an anxiety and uneasiness as to their effect, which gave a tinge of coxcombry to his reserve. Both had great natural, and, for their age, uncommonly cultivated talents; but those of Clarence were of a sturdy and healthful kind, well fitted to buffet with this rude world—those of the poor artist sickly and premature plants, which were ill suited to the atmosphere in which they were placed; the abilities of Clarence were chiefly such as find their best sphere in action; those of Warner perfectly useless in such fields of living encounter, were at once the offspring and the denizens of imagination. In a word, if we can suppose their powers to be equal in degree, there was this advantage on the side of Clarence, all of his were exactly of an order that could be brought to bear in the world, and all those of Warner were not only precisely unfitted for the world themselves, but especially calculated to unfit their possessor.

But the trait between them, at once the most in common, and the most differing, was ambition. The ambition of Clarence was that of circumstances rather than character; the certainty of having to carve out his own fortunes without sympathy or aid, joined to those whispers of indignant pride which naturally urged him, if disowned by those who should have protected him, to allow no breath of shame to justify the reproach: these gave an irresistible desire of distinction to a mind naturally too gay for the devotedness, too susceptible for the pangs, and too benevolent for the selfishness of ordinary ambition. But the very essence and spirit of Warner's nature, was the burning and feverish desire of fame; it poured through his veins like lava; it preyed even as a worm upon his cheek; it corroded his natural sleep; it blackened the colour of his thoughts; it shut out, as with an impenetrable wall, the wholesome energies and

enjoyments and objects of living men; and taking from him all the vividness of the present, all the tenderness of the past, constrained his heart to dwell for ever and for ever upon the dim and shadowy chimeras of a future he was fated never to enjoy.

But these differences of character, so far from disturbing rather cemented their friendship; and while Warner (notwithstanding his advantage of age) paid involuntary deference to the stronger character of Clarence, he, in his turn, derived that species of pleasure by which he was most gratified, from the affectionate and unenvious interest Clarence took in his speculations of future distinction, and the unwearying admiration with which he would sit by his side, and watch the colours start from the canvass, beneath the real though uncultured genius of the youthful painter. Hitherto, Warner had bounded his attempts to some of the lesser efforts of the

art; he had now yielded to the urgent enthusiasm of his nature, and conceived the plan of an historical picture. Oh! what sleepless nights, what struggles of the teeming fancy with the dense brain, what labours of the untiring thought, wearing and intense as disease itself, did it cost the ambitious artist to work out in the stillness of his soul, and from its confused and conflicting images, the design of this long meditated and idolized performance. But when it *was* designed; when shape upon shape grew and swelled, and glowed from the darkness of previous thought upon the painter's mind; when shutting his eyes in the very credulity of delight, the whole work arose before him, glossy with its fresh hues, bright, completed, faultless, arrayed as it were, and decked out for immortality—oh! then what a full and gushing moment of rapture broke like a released stream upon his soul! What a recompense for wasted

years, health, and hope! What a coronal to the visions and transports of Genius; brief, it is true, but how steeped in the very halo of a light that might well be deemed the glory of heaven!

But the vision fades, the gorgeous shapes sweep on into darkness, and waking from his reverie, the artist sees before him only the dull walls of his narrow chamber; the canvass stretched a blank upon its frame; the works, maimed, crude, unfinished, of an inexperienced hand, lying idly around; and feels himself—*himself* but one moment before the creator of a world of wonders, the master spirit of shapes gorgeous and majestical beyond the shapes of men—dashed down from his momentary height, and despoiled both of his sorcery and his throne.

It was just in such a moment that Warner, starting up, saw Linden (who had silently

entered his room,) standing motionless before him.

"Oh! Linden," said the artist, "I have had so glorious a dream—a dream which, though I have before snatched some such vision by fits and glimpses, I never beheld so realized, so perfect as now; and—but you shall see, you shall judge for yourself, I will sketch out the design for you;" and with a piece of chalk, and a rapid hand, Warner conveyed to Linden the outline of his conception. His young friend was eager in his praise and his predictions of renown, and Warner listened to him with a fondness, which spread over his pale cheek a richer flush than lover ever caught from the whispers of his beloved.

"Yes," said he, as he rose, and his sunken and small eye flashed out with a feverish brightness, "yes, if my hand does not fail my thought, it shall rival even—" Here the young painter

stopped short, abashed at that indiscretion of enthusiasm about to utter to another the hoarded vanities hitherto locked in his heart of hearts as a sealed secret, almost from himself.

"But come," said Clarence, affectionately, "your hand is feverish and dry, and of late you have seemed more languid than you were wont—come, Warner, you want exercise: it is a beautiful evening, and you shall explain your picture still farther to me as we walk."

Accustomed to yield to Clarence, Warner mechanically and abstractedly obeyed; they walked out into the open streets.

"Look around us," said Warner, pausing, "look among this toiling, and busy, and sordid mass of beings, who claim with us the fellowship of clay. The poor labour, the rich feast, the only distinction between them is that of the insect and the brute; like them they fulfil the same end, and share the same oblivion; they

die, a new race springs up, and the very grass upon their graves fades not so soon as their memory. Who, that was conscious of a higher nature, would not pine and fret himself away to be confounded with these? Who would not burn, and sicken, and parch, with a delirious longing to divorce himself from so vile a herd? What have their petty pleasures, and their mean aims, to atone for the abasement of grinding down our spirits to their level? Is not the distinction from their blended and common name, a sufficient recompense for all that ambition suffers or foregoes? Oh, for one brief hour (I ask no more) of living honour, one feeling of conscious, unfearing certainty, that Fame has conquered Death, and then for this humble and impotent clay, this drag on the spirit which it does not assist but fetter, this wretched machine of pains and aches, and feverish throbbings, and vexed inquietudes,

why, let the worms consume it, and the grave hide—for Fame there is *no* grave!"

At that moment one of those unfortunate women, who earn their polluted sustenance by becoming the hypocrites of passion, passed, and judging by the youth of the friends of their proneness to temptation, accosted them.

"Miserable wretch!" said Warner, loathingly, as he pushed her aside; but Clarence, with a kindlier feeling, noticed that her haggard cheek was wet with tears, and that her frame, weak and trembling, could scarcely support itself; he, therefore, with that promptitude of charity, which gives ere it discriminates, put some pecuniary assistance in her hand, and joined his comrade.

"You would not have spoken so tauntingly to the poor girl had you remarked her distress," said Clarence.

"And why," said Warner, mournfully, "why

be so cruel as to prolong, even for a few hours, an existence, which mercy would only seek to bring nearer to the tomb? That unfortunate is but one of the herd, one of the victims to pleasures, which debase by their progress, and ruin by their end. Yet perhaps she is not worse than the usual followers of love—of love—that passion the most worshipped, yet the least divine, selfish and exacting, drawing its aliment from destruction, and its very nature from tears."

"Nay," said Clarence, "you confound the two loves, the Eros and the Anteros, gods whom my good tutor was wont so sedulously to distinguish: you surely do not inveigh thus against *all* love?"

"I cry you mercy," said Warner, with something of sarcasm in his pensiveness of tone. "We must not dispute, so I will hold my peace; but make love all you will, what are the false smiles

of a lip which a few years can blight as an autumn leaf? what the homage of a heart as feeble and mortal as your own? Why, I with a few strokes of a little hair, and an idle mixture of worthless colours, will create a beauty in whose mouth there shall be no hollowness—in whose lip there shall be no fading—there in your admiration you shall have no need of flattery, no desire of falsehood; you shall not be stung with jealousy, nor maddened with treachery; nor watch with a breaking heart over waning bloom, and departing health, till the grave open, and your perishable paradise is *not*. No—the mimic work is mightier than the original, for it outlasts it; your love cannot wither it, or your desertion destroy—your very death, as the being who called it into life, only stamps it with a holier value."

"And so then," said Clarence, "you would seriously relinquish, for the mute copy of the

mere features, those affections which no painting can express ?"

"Ay," said the painter, with an energy unusual to his quiet manner, and slightly wandering in his answer from Clarence's remark, "Ay, one serves not two mistresses—mine is the glory of my art. Oh! what are the cold shapes of this tame earth, where the footsteps of the gods have vanished, and left no trace, the blemished forms, the debased brows, and the jarring features, to the glorious and gorgeous images which I can conjure up at my will? Away with human beauties, to him whose nights are haunted with the forms of angels and wanderers from the stars, the spirits of all things lovely and exalted in the universe—the universe as it *was*—when fountain, and stream, and hill, and every tree which the summer clothed, was made lovely as in heaven, by the guardiancy of its nymph!—when through glade, and by

water-fall, at glossy noon-tide, or under the silver stars, the forms of Godhead and Spirit were seen to walk; when the sculptor modelled his mighty work from the beauty and strength of Heaven, and the poet lay in the shade to dream of the Naiad and the Fawn, and the Olympian dwellers whom he waked in rapture to behold; and the painter, not as now, shaping from shadow and in solitude the dim glories of his art, caught at once his inspiration from the glow of earth and its living wanderers, and, lo, the canvass breathed! Oh! what are the dull realities and the abortive offspring of this altered and humbled world—the world of meaner and dwarfish men—to him whose realms are peopled with visions like these?"

And the artist, whose ardour, long excited, and pent within, had at last thus audibly, and to Clarence's astonishment, burst forth, paused, as if to recal himself from his wandering en-

thusiasm. Such moments of excitement were, indeed, rare with him, except when utterly alone, and even then, were almost invariably followed by that depression of spirit by which all over-wrought susceptibility is succeeded. A change came over his face, like that of a cloud, when the sun-beam which gilded leaves it, and with a slight sigh, and a subdued tone, he resumed:

"So, my friend, you see what our art can do even for the humblest professor, when I, a poor friendless, patronless artist, can thus indulge myself by forgetting the present. But I have not yet explained to you the attitude of my principal figure;" and Warner proceeded once more to detail the particulars of his intended picture. It must be confessed that he had chosen a fine, though an arduous subject: it was the Trial of Charles the First in Westminster Hall; and as the painter, with the

enthusiasm of his profession, and the eloquence peculiar to himself, dwelt upon the various expressions of the various forms which that extraordinary judgment court afforded, no wonder that Clarence forgot, with the artist himself, the disadvantages Warner had to encounter, in the inexperience of an unregulated taste, and an imperfect professional education.

CHAPTER XIV.

"All manners take a tincture from our own,
Or come discoloured through our passions shown."

POPE.

"What! give up liberty, property, and, as the Gazetteer says, lie down to be saddled with wooden shoes?"

Vicar of Wakefield.

THERE was something in the melancholy and reflective character of Warner, resembling that of Mordaunt; had they lived in these days, perhaps both the artist and the philosopher had been poets. But (with regard to the latter) at that time poetry was not the customary vent for deep thought, or passionate feeling. Gray, it is true, though unjustly condemned as arti-

ficial and meretricious in his style, had infused into the scanty works which he has bequeathed to immortality, a pathos and a richness foreign to the literature of the age; and, subsequently, Goldsmith, in the affecting, yet somewhat enervate simplicity of his verse, had obtained for Poesy a brief respite from a school at once declamatory and powerless, and led her forth for a "Sunshine Holiday," into the village green, and under the hawthorn shade. But, though the softer and meeker feelings had struggled into a partial and occasional vent, those which partook more of passion and of thought, the deep, the wild, the fervid, were still without "the music of a voice." For the after century it was reserved to restore what we may be permitted to call the spirit of our national literature; to forsake the *clinquant* of the French mimickers of classic gold; to exchange a thrice adulterated Hippocrene, for the pure well of

Shakspeare and of nature; to clothe philosophy in the gorgeous and solemn majesty of appropriate music; and to invest passion with a language as burning as its thought, and rapid as its impulse. At that time reflection found its natural channel in metaphysical inquiry, or political speculation: both valuable, perhaps, but neither profound. It was a bold, and a free, and a curious age, but not one in which thought run over its set and stationary banks, and watered even the common flowers of verse: not one in which Lucretius could have embodied the dreams of Epicurus; Shakspeare lavished the mines of a superhuman wisdom upon his fairy palaces and enchanted isles; or the Beautifier* of this common earth have called forth—

> "The motion of the spirit that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought;"

* Wordsworth.

or Disappointment and Satiety have hallowed their human griefs by a pathos, wrought from whatever is magnificent, and grand, and lovely in the unknown universe; or the speculations of an unfathomed and unhappy mind* have raised upon subtlety and doubt, a vast and irregular pile of verse, full of dim-lighted cells, and winding galleries, in which, what treasures lie concealed! That was an age, in which poetry took one path, and contemplation another; those who were addicted to the latter, pursued it in its orthodox roads; and many whom Nature, perhaps, intended for poets, the wizard Custom converted into speculators or critics.

It was this which gave to Algernon's studies their peculiar hue; while, on the other hand, the taste for the fine arts which then universally, and rather cantingly prevailed, directed to the

* Shelley.

creations of painting, rather than those of poetry, more really congenial to his powers; the intense imagination and passion for glory which marked and pervaded the character of the artist.

But as we have seen that that passion for glory made the great characteristic difference between Clarence and Warner; so also did that passion terminate any resemblance which Warner bore to Algernon Mordaunt. With the former, a rank and unwholesome plant, it grew up to the exclusion of all else: with the latter, subdued and regulated, it *sheltered*, not *withered*, the virtues by which it was surrounded. With Warner, ambition was a passionate desire to separate himself by fame, from the herd of other men; with Mordaunt, to bind himself by charity yet closer to his kind: with the one it produced a disgust to his species; with the other, a pity and a love: with the one, power was the badge of distinction; with the other, the

means to bless! Contented with this brief, but perhaps sufficient discrimination of characters never cast into collision, proceed we in our story.

It was now the custom of Warner to spend the whole day at his work, and wander out with Clarence, when the evening darkened, to snatch a brief respite of exercise and air. Often along the lighted and populous streets, would the two young and unfriended competitors for this world's high places, roam with the various crowd, moralizing as they went, or holding dim conjecture upon their destinies to be. And often would they linger beneath the portico of some house where, "haunted with great resort," Pleasure and Pomp held their nightly revels, to listen to the music that through the open windows stole over the rare exotics with which wealth mimics the southern scents, and floated, mellowing by distance, along the unworthy streets; and while they stood together, silent,

and each feeding upon separate thoughts, the artist's pale lip would curl with scorn, as he heard the laugh and the sounds of a frivolous and hollow mirth ring from the crowd within, and startle the air from the silver spell which music had laid upon it. "These," would he say to Clarence, "these are the dupes of the same fever as ourselves: like us, they strive, and toil, and vex their little lives for a distinction from their race. Ambition comes to them, as to all; but they throw for a different prize than we do: theirs is the honour of a day, ours is immortality; yet they take the same labour, and are consumed by the same care. And, fools that they are, with their gilded names and their gaudy trappings, they would shrink in disdain from that comparison with us, which we, with a juster fastidiousness, blush at this moment to acknowledge."

From these scenes they would rove on, and,

both delighting in contrast, pause next in a squalid and obscure quarter of the city. There, one night, quiet observers of their kind, they paused beside a group congregated together by some common cause of obscure merriment or unholy fellowship — a group on which low Vice had set her sordid and hideous stamp—to gaze and draw strange humour or a motley moral from that depth and ferment of human nature, into whose sink the thousand streams of civilization had poured their dregs and offal.

"You survey these," said the painter, marking each with the curious eye of his profession: "they are a base horde, it is true; but they have their thirst of fame, their aspirations even in the abyss of crime, or the loathsomeness of famished want. Down in yon cellar, where a farthing rushlight glimmers upon haggard cheeks, distorted with the idiotcy of drink— there, in that foul attic, from whose casement

you see the beggar's rags hang to dry, or rather to crumble in the reeking and filthy air—farther on, within those walls which, black and heavy as the hearts they hide, close our miserable prospect,—there, even there, in the mildewed dungeon, in the felon's cell, on the scaffold's self—Ambition hugs her hope, or scowls upon her despair. Yes! the inmates of those walls had their perilous game of honour, their 'hazard of the die,' in which vice was triumph and infamy success. We do but share their passion, though we direct it to a better object."

Pausing for a moment, as his thoughts flowed into a somewhat different channel of his character, Warner continued—"We have now caught a glimpse of the two great divisions of mankind: they who riot in palaces, and they who make mirth hideous in rags and hovels: own that it is but a poor survey in either. Can we be contemptible with these, or loathsome

with those? Or rather have we not a nobler spark within us, which we have but to fan into a flame, that shall burn for ever, when these miserable meteors sink into the corruption from which they rise?"

"But," observed Clarence, "these are the two extremes; the pinnacle of civilization too worn and bare for any more noble and vigorous fruit, and the base upon which the cloud descends in rain and storm. Look to the central portion of society; there the soil is more genial, and its produce more rich."

"Is it so, in truth?" answered Warner; "pardon me, I believe not: the middling classes are as human as the rest. There is the region, the heart of Avarice systematized, spreading, rotting, the very fungus and leprosy of social states—suspicion, craft, hypocrisy, servility to the great, oppression to the low, the wax-like mimicry of courtly vices, the hardness of flint to humble

woes, thought, feeling, the faculties and impulses of man, all ulcered into one great canker—Gain. —These make the general character of the middling class, the unleavened mass of that mediocrity which it has been the wisdom of the shallow to applaud. Pah! we are of this class, this potter's earth, this paltry mixture of mud and stone; but we, my friend, we will knead gold into our clay."

"But look," said Clarence, pointing to the group before them; "look, yon wretched mother, whose voice an instant ago uttered the coarsest accents of maudlin and intoxicated prostitution, is now fostering her infant, with a fondness stamped upon her worn cheek and hollow eye, which might shame the nice maternity of nobles;—and there too, yon wretch whom, in the reckless effrontery of hardened abandonment, we ourselves heard a few minutes since boast of his dexterity in theft,

and openly exhibit its token—look, he is now, with a Samaritan's own charity, giving the very goods for which his miserable life was risked, to that attenuated and starving stripling! No, Warner, no! even this mass is *not* unleavened. The vilest infamy is not too deep for the seraph Virtue to descend and illuminate its abyss!"

"Out on the weak fools!" said the artist, bitterly: "it would be something if they could be consistent even in crime!" and placing his arm in Linden's, he drew him away.

As the picture grew beneath the painter's hand, Clarence was much struck with the outline and expression of countenance given to the regicide Bradshaw.

"They are but an imperfect copy of the living original from whom I have borrowed them," said Warner, in answer to Clarence's remark upon the sternness of the features. "But

that original—a relation of mine, is coming here to-day—you shall see him."

While Warner was yet speaking, the person in question entered. His were, indeed, the form and face worthy to be seized by the painter. The peculiarity of his character, which we shall presently describe, made him affect a plainness of dress unusual to the day, and approaching to the simplicity, but not the neatness of Quakerism. His hair, then, with all the better ranks, a principal object of cultivation, was wild, dishevelled, and in wiry flakes of the sablest hue, rose abruptly from a forehead on which either thought or passion had written its annals with an iron pen; the lower part of the brow, which overhung the eye, was singularly sharp and prominent; while the lines, or rather furrows, traced under the eyes and nostrils, spoke somewhat of exhaustion and internal fatigue. But this expression was con-

trasted and contradicted by the firmly compressed lip; the lighted, steady, stern eye; the resolute and even stubborn front, joined to proportions strikingly athletic, and a stature of uncommon height.

"Well, Wolfe," said the young painter to the person we have described, "it is, indeed, a kindness to give me a second sitting."

"Tush, boy!" answered Wolfe: "all men have their vain points, and I own that I am not ill pleased that these rugged features should be assigned, even in fancy, to one of the noblest of those men who judged the mightiest cause in which a country was ever plaintiff, a tyrant criminal, and a world witness!"

While Wolfe was yet speaking, his countenance, so naturally harsh, took a yet sterner aspect, and the artist, by a happy touch, succeeded in transferring it to the canvass.

"But, after all," continued Wolfe, "it

shames me to lend aid to an art frivolous in itself, and almost culpable in times when Freedom wants the head to design, and, perchance, the hand to execute far other and nobler works than the blazoning of her past deeds upon perishable canvass."

A momentary anger at the slight put upon his art crossed the pale brow of the artist; but he remembered the character of the man, and continued his work in silence.

"You consider then, Sir, that these are times in which liberty is attacked," said Clarence.

"Attacked!" repeated Wolfe—"attacked!" and then suddenly sinking his voice into a sort of sneer—"why, since the event which this painting is designed to commemorate—I know not if we have ever had one solitary gleam of liberty break along the great chaos of jarring prejudice and barbarous law which we term, forsooth, a glorious constitution. Liberty at-

tacked! no, boy—but it is a time when liberty may be gained."

Perfectly unacquainted with the excited politics of the day, or the growing and mighty spirit which then stirred through the minds of men, Clarence remained silent; but his evident attention flattered the fierce republican, and he proceeded.

"Ay," he said slowly, and as if drinking in a deep and stern joy from his conviction in the truth of the words he uttered—"Ay—I have wandered over the face of the earth, and I have warmed my soul at the fires which lay hidden under its quiet surface; I have been in the city and the desert—the herded and banded crimes of the old world, and the scattered, but bold hearts which are found among the mountains and morasses of the new; and in either I have beheld that seed sown, which, from a mustard grain, too scanty for a bird's beak, shall grow up to be a

shelter and a home for the whole family of man. I have looked upon the thrones of kings, and lo, the anointed ones were in purple and festive pomp; and I looked *beneath* the thrones, and I saw Want and Hunger, and despairing Wrath gnawing the foundations away. I have stood in the streets of that great city, where Mirth seems to hold an eternal jubilee, and beheld the noble riot, while the peasant starved; and the priest build altars to Mammon, piled from the earnings of groaning Labour, and cemented with blood and tears. But I looked farther, and saw in the rear, chains sharpened into swords, misery ripening into justice, and famine darkening into revenge; and I laughed as I beheld, for I knew that the day of the oppressed was at hand."

Somewhat awed by the prophetic tone, though revolted by what seemed to him the novelty and

the fierceness of the sentiments of the republican, Clarence, after a brief pause, said—

"And what of our own country?"

Wolfe's brow darkened. "The oppression here," said he, "has not been so weighty, therefore the re-action will be less strong; the parties are more blended, therefore their separation will be more arduous; the extortion is less strained, therefore the endurance will be more meek; but soon or late the struggle must come: bloody will it be, if the strife be even; gentle and lasting, if the people predominate."

"And if the rulers be the strongest?" said Clarence.

"The struggle will be renewed," replied Wolfe, doggedly.

"You still attend those oratorical meetings, cousin, I think?" said Warner.

"I do," said Wolfe; "and if you are not so

utterly absorbed in your vain and idle art, as to be indifferent to all things nobler, you will learn yourself to take interest in what concerns —I will not say your country—but mankind. For you, young man," (and the republican turned to Clarence,) "I would fain hope that life has not already been directed from the greatest of human objects; if so, come to-morrow night to our assembly, and learn from worthier lips than mine, the precepts and the hopes for which good men live or die."

"I will come at all events to listen, if not to learn," said Clarence, eagerly, for his curiosity was excited. And the republican having now fulfilled the end of his visit, rose and departed.

CHAPTER XV.

> " Bound to suffer persecution
> And martyrdom with resolution,
> T' oppose *himself* against the hate
> And vengeance of the incensed state."
>
> *Hudibras.*

Born of respectable, though not aristocratic parents, John Wolfe was one of those fiery and daring spirits, which, previous to some mighty revolution, fate seems to scatter over various parts of the earth, even those removed from the predestined explosion, heralds of the events in which they are fitted, though not fated to be actors. The period at which he is presented to

the reader, was one considerably prior to that French Revolution so much debated, so little understood, and which, too hacknied for interest to the novel reader, the author is truly rejoiced was so long anterior to the occurrences of his history. But some such event, though not foreseen by the common, had been already foreboded by the more enlightened eye ; and Wolfe, from a protracted residence in France, among the most discontented of its freer spirits, had brought hope to that burning enthusiasm, which had long made the pervading passion of his existence.

Bold to ferocity, generous in devotion to folly in self-sacrifice, unflinching in his tenets to a degree which rendered their ardour ineffectual to all times, because utterly inapplicable to the present, Wolfe was one of those zealots whose very virtues have the semblance of vice,

and whose very capacities for danger become harmless from the rashness of their excess.

It was not among the philosophers and reasoners of France, that Wolfe had drawn strength to his opinions: whatever such companions might have done to his tenets, they would at least have moderated his actions. The philosopher may aid, or expedite (though not, as it has foolishly been said, *create*) a change; but never does the philosopher in any age or of any sect, countenance a crime.* But of philosophers Wolfe knew little, and probably despised them for their temperance: it was among fanatics—ignorant, but imaginative; powerful, perhaps, in talent, but weak in mind—that he had

* The motto prefixed to the edition of Helvetius in 1792, seems to me strikingly applicable to this remark :—

"Ce sont les fanatiques, les prêtres et les ignorans qui font les révolutions; les personnes éclairés desintéressées et sensées sont toujours amies du repos."—Boulanger.

strengthened the love without comprehending the nature of republicanism. Like Lucian's painter, whose flattery portrayed the one-eyed prince in profile, he viewed only that side of the question in which there was no defect, and gave beauty to the whole by concealing the half. Thus, though on his return to England, herding with the common class of his reforming brethren, Wolfe possessed many peculiarities and distinctions of character, which in rendering him strikingly adapted to the purpose of the dramatic or philosophic novelist, must serve as a caution to the reader, not to judge of the class by the individual.

With the *class* of Republicans in England, there was a strong tendency to support their cause by reasoning. With Wolfe, whose mind was little wedded to logic, all was the offspring of turbulent feelings, which in rejecting argument substituted declamation for syllogism.

This effected a powerful and irreconcileable distinction between Wolfe and the better part of his comrades; for the habits of cool reasoning, whether true or false, are little likely to bias the mind towards those crimes to which Wolfe's irregulated emotions might possibly urge him, and give to the characters, to which they are a sort of common denominator, something of method, and much of similarity. But the feelings—those orators which allow no calculation, and baffle the tameness of comparison—rendered Wolfe alone, unique, eccentric in opinion or action, whether of vice or virtue, and consequently well calculated for those strong lights and shadows which dramatic fiction loves to single from the common-places of ordinary life.

Private ties frequently moderate the ardour of our public enthusiasm—Wolfe had none. His nearest relation was Warner, and it may readily be supposed that with the pensive and

contemplative artist he had very little in common. He had never married, nor had even seemed to wander from his stern and sterile path, in the most momentary pursuit of the pleasures of sense. Inflexibly honest, rigidly austere—in his moral character his bitterest enemies could detect no flaw—poor, even to indigence, he had invariably refused all overtures of the government—thrice imprisoned and heavily fined for his doctrines, no fear of a future, no remembrance of the past, punishment could ever silence his bitter eloquence, or moderate the passion of his untempered zeal—kindly, though rude, his scanty means were ever shared by the less honest and disinterested followers of his faith; and he has been known for days to deprive himself of food, and for nights of shelter, for the purpose of yielding them to another.

Such was the man doomed to forsake, through

a long and wasted life, every substantial blessing, in pursuit of a shadowy good; with the warmest benevolence in his heart, to relinquish private affections, and to brood even to madness over public offences—to sacrifice every thing in a generous, though erring devotion, for that freedom, whose cause instead of promoting, he was calculated to retard; and while he believed himself the martyr of a high and uncompromising virtue, to close his career with the greatest of human crimes.

Upon persons of this class, rather to be pitied than condemned, public indignation has, however, lavished more odium than they deserve: they are instances, not of malevolence, but of an ill-directed philanthropy; and those who seek to extend and generalize our happiness or freedom, even by imprudent and impracticable theories, are at least more worthy of our forgiveness than the bigots of the opposite

extreme, who from motives less honest, and principles more permanently dangerous, would confine prosperity to the few, and restriction to the many.

CHAPTER XVI.

"Nul n'aura de l'esprit hors nous et nos amis."
MOLIERE.

WHEN Clarence returned home, after the conversation recorded in our last chapter, he found a note from Talbot inviting him to meet some friends of the latter at supper that evening. It was the first time Clarence had been asked, and he looked forward with some curiosity and impatience to the hour appointed in the note for personally accepting the invitation.

It is impossible to convey any idea of the

jealous rancour felt by Mr. and Mrs. Copperas on hearing of this distinction — a distinction which "the perfect courtier" had never once bestowed upon themselves.

Mrs. Copperas tossed her head, too indignant for words; and the stock-jobber, in the bitterness of his soul, affirmed with a meaning air, "that he dared say, after all, that the old gentleman was not so rich as he gave out." In England, not to be rich is not to be virtuous. Poverty is a crime, and "a poor beggarly fellow," the apex of abuse.

On entering Talbot's drawing-room Clarence found about seven or eight people assembled: their names, in proclaiming the nature of the party, indicated that the aim of the host was (like that of a modern club-house, ycleped the Athenæum), to combine aristocracy and talent. The literary acquirements, and worldly tact of Talbot, joined to the adventitious circumstances of

birth and fortune, enabled him to effect this object, so desirable in polished society, far better than we generally find it effected now; yet still in seeking to unite two opposite essences, the spirit of both will frequently evaporate, and instead of an exchange of intellect on the one hand and refinement on the other, the wit becomes aristocratically dull, and the aristocrat flippantly jocose: however, time hallows insipidity, and the literary chit-chat of a former day, is always received with more pleasure than that of the present.

"Well," said Lord Welwyn, a little talkative nobleman, a great critic, a small poet, and prouder of some certain verses in Dodsley's Miscellany than of all his ancestors and acres—"Well, I hope at last that we shall have a good and true life of Pope. Poor Spence's papers are, I understand, to be published."*

* They were supposed to be more valuable than their recent publication has proved them to be.

"Ah, ah, poor Spence!" said Mr. Desborough, the author of a Treatise upon Gardening and Ornamental Farming, at that time two of the most fashionable studies—"Poor Spence! drowned, was he not? in his own garden too. Suppose you make an ode about it, my lord; say he was turned into a river god—fine image. Humph, ha!—your snuff-box, if you please, my lord."

"He was found upon the edge of the water," said George Perrivale, a great wit of the day, viz. one of the most ill-natured people—for the envy of mankind is an alchymy which always transmutes ill-nature into wit—"he was found upon the edge of the water, with his face as flat as his own books; they said the water was too shallow to cover his head, emblematic of his knowledge, poor fellow, which had the same deficiency!—You may say of him what was said of his own

Polymetis, 'he sunk by his own weight, and will never rise again.'"

"An impartial life of Pope will indeed be a most desirable work," said Talbot. "What a noble mind he had! His poetry is the least ornament of his character—brave in despite of his constitution—generous in despite of his economy—kind in despite of his satire—and philosophical in despite of his fancy."

"There were never two minds, in modern times," said Clarence, modestly, "so cast upon a classic and ancient model, as those of Bolingbroke and Pope; there was something so beautiful too in their friendship. I have always thought one of the most touching anecdotes recorded, is that of Lord Bolingbroke leaning over Pope's chair, in his last illness, and weeping lik a child."

"True," said Talbot,* "and mingling his

* See Spence's Anecdotes, page 320, 321; in which this and

fine reflections even with his tears: you are right in calling them classic minds: it was a classic age, and they were of that age the noblest spirits. Bolingbroke, in his turn of mind, his eloquence, his philosophy, his enthusiastic love of virtue, his veneration for friendship, which he termed virtue, perhaps in his lofty vanity and magnificence of egotism, has no parallel but in Tully: he excelled, however, the Roman in the moral of public courage, and fell far short of him in the morals of private life."

"You knew Bolingbroke well, I think," said Mr. Desborough, "he was fond of farming —what a great man!"

"Yes: I knew him in his latter days when he was at Battersea; he was at once the most courtly, and profoundly intellectual person I

other anecdotes of Pope's death and Bolingbroke's affection, then the traditional on-dits of conversation, have since been recorded.

ever met; quite the man you could imagine calculated to win, both from Swift, and our living Chesterfield, the praise of being the greatest man they ever met; a wonderful praise when you consider how contrary to each other the praisers were, and that we rarely praise people who excel in any other faculties than our own. I remember also having seen Pope twice at Twickenham."

"And did he not enchant you with his wit?" said Lord Welwyn, who valued himself upon writing precisely in the true Pope style.

"Not exactly," said Talbot, smiling; "he was very grave and philosophical in conversation, and did not utter a single sentence that could be called witty."

"Ah," said, conceitedly, the wit by profession, "there is all the difference in the world between saying a good thing impromptu, and having the whole morning to make it in one's

closet. It is the difference indeed of a rich man and an embarrassed one; of a man spending his income daily, and with ease, or of one raising a mortgage on his property in order to pay off a bill by a certain time. But tell me, gentlemen, would Pope ever have been worshipped by one half his contemporaries if he had not abused the other half."

"Why," answered Talbot, "the question is difficult enough to answer: I confess that I do not know a surer proof of the malice of mankind, than the rank which is accorded to a satirist. Satire is a dwarf, which stands upon the shoulders of the giant Ill-Nature; and the kingdom of verse, like that of Epirus, is often left not to him who has the noblest genius, but 'the sharpest sword.'"

"Ah!" cried Mr. Perrivale, "the wit of a satirist is like invisible writing: look at it with an indifferent eye, and, lo! there is none: hold

it up to the light, and you can't perceive it; but rub it over with *your own spirit of acid*, and see how plain and striking it becomes."

Talbot smiled at an allusion so unconsciously applicable to the merit of the speaker; but the little Lord Welwyn lifted up his hands and eyes. To doubt the excellence of one's model, is indeed the bitterest sarcasm upon one's self.

"What profanation!" cried his lordship. "I thought since the days of Curll and Cibber, no man could be found to dispute the unrivalled pre-eminence of Pope. No, no, let *Zoiluses* be ever so plenty, there will never be such another Homer!" and as he uttered the word Zoilus, his lordship tapped his snuff-box, and glanced at the critic.

The wit looked angry, and prepared for a reply: he was interrupted—"Pray," squeaked out a pert looking gentleman, short and laconic as a conjunction, but, like a conjunction, also

very useful in uniting differences — "pray, what does your lordship think of the poet Gray?"

"Oh!" quoth his lordship, in a tone of true literary contempt, "a terrible innovator—a republican in verse, affecting to be original. Shallow dog! Good Heavens, to think of calling such barbarous alliterations, such lawless metres, such confused epithets, poetry! Where do you ever find them in Pope, or Tickell, or Duck. No, let him imitate his friend Mason, and learn chasteness of expression. Magnificent work, Elfrida!"

"The fruit trees of Parnassus are certainly in their decline," said the author of a Treatise upon Ornamental Gardening.

"And all we can do," quoth his poetical lordship, pursuing the metaphor, "is to pick up the few windfalls which have hitherto escaped attention."

"And what think you," asked some one, "of the fashionable Dr. Goldsmith? You admire the 'Traveller?'"

"Paltry stuff, indeed!" replied the critic. "Low—vulgar—no art in the verses—all so d—d natural; why, any body could write them. Let him take pattern from Tickell, and learn majesty. I hate this new school: a sure sign of decay in true taste, all these innovations. There was Gilbert West, some time ago, writing a long poem, in the metre of the Faery Queen—thank Heaven, we were not quite sunk so utterly in criticism as to approve it—but I foresee, mark my words, I foresee that in the progress of degeneracy, we shall have all the critics praising, and all the town buying, some poem in the same barbarous stanza, and perhaps four times as long; or, still worse, some future poet may become the rage, by spinning out those gothic

old ballads Dr. Percy admires so much, into tales as long as an epic."

"No, no," cried two or three of the company, simultaneously; "you are too severe now, my lord!"

His lordship took breath and snuff.

"Perhaps," said Talbot, "the future poets will be more indebted to Gray and Goldsmith than we think, or they themselves will perceive: from the former they may borrow richness, from the latter simplicity. And that taste for our old songs lately introduced, and which I hear Dr. Johnson agrees with Lord Welwyn in discountenancing, may be, more than any living author, beneficial to the literature of the after age."

"How?" asked Clarence.

"By giving," answered Talbot, "a chivalrous and romantic tone to a muse at present enervate

and *unnational, and which, if it does not receive an utterly new impulse, will soon degenerate into the most mawkish imbecility."

"There is a poet of the present age," said one of the company, "whose prose works evince what he might have become; and, though he

* Criticisms introduced into the light dialogues of a novel must necessarily be short; and the authority of another is peculiarly desirable when it serves to strengthen those less common opinions which require a more elaborate explanation than opportunity can give. Long after we had attributed to Talbot a sort of prophecy on the future value of Dr. Percy's Reliques in restoring and purifying public taste, we found a passage in the supplement to the preface of Mr. Wordsworth's collected Poems, vol. ii., page 381, which, as a remarkable sanction to our own opinion, (an opinion we had never before seen expressed in any inquiry into the spirit of our present poetry,) we have great pleasure in transcribing.—"I have already stated how much Germany is indebted to this latter work;* and for our own country, its poetry has been absolutely redeemed by it. I do not think that there is an able writer in verse of the present day who would not be proud to acknowledge his obligations to the Reliques; I know that it is so with my friends: and for myself, I am happy, on this occasion, to make a public avowal of my own."

* Percy's Reliques.

has incurred Lord Welwyn's displeasure, by writing a poem in Spencer's stanza, I own he is a great favourite with me—poor Shenstone."

"Ah, the *author of the Leasowes*; a charming *place!*" said the writer of a Treatise upon Ornamental Gardening. "He must, indeed, have been a great man!"

"What!" cried the wit, "the pastoral poet? Pardon me, Sir: but his verses are like his brooks; "their murmurs invite me to sleep." There is something overpoweringly somniferous in the following stanza—

"'Ye shepherds give ear to my lay,
And take no more heed of my sheep,
They have nothing to do but to stray,
I have nothing to do but to weep.'

What think you of the amendment I propose—

"My readers, we're losing our time,
My sheep are escap'd from the lawn;
I have nothing to do but to rhyme,
You have nothing to do but to yawn?"

"Pooh," said the author of a Treatise on Gardening, far too literal a sort of person to take a jest—"Pooh, a parody is no criticism: one might make a duck-pond out of a fountain. A man who made the Leasowes is above travesty."

"Most true," answered the wit; "you have convinced me. In Shenstone's own splendid diction—

"'My breast is too kind to remain
Unmov'd when my Corydon sighs;
His verses are soft as his brain,
And as sweet as his gooseberry pies.'"

As, with a sentimental and lacrymose air, which gave to the burlesque a drollery its own merit could not bestow, Mr. Perrivale recited these lines, the servant entering, announced supper.

That was the age of suppers! Happy age! Meal of ease and mirth; when Wine and Night lit the lamp of Wit! O, what precious things were said and looked at those banquets of the

soul! There epicurism was in the lip as well as the palate, and one had humour for a *hors d'œuvre* and repartee for an *entremet*. In dinner, there is something too pompous, too formal, too exigent of attention, for the delicacies and levites of *persiflage*. One's intellectual appetite, like the physical, is coarse, but dull. At dinner one is fit only for eating, *after* dinner only for politics. But supper was a glorious relic of the antients. The bustle of the day had thoroughly wound up the spirit, and every stroke upon the dial plate of wit, was true to the genius of the hour. The wallet of diurnal anecdote was full, and craved unloading. The great meal—that vulgar first love of the appetite—was over, and one now only flattered it into coquetting with another. The mind, disengaged and free, was no longer absorbed in a salmi, or burthened with a joint. The *gourmand* carried the nicety of his physical percep-

tion to his moral, and applauded a *bon mot* instead of a *bonne bouche*.

Then too one had no necessity to keep a reserve of thought for the after evening: supper was the final consummation, the glorious funeral pyre of day. One could be merry till bed-time without an interregnum. Nay, if in the ardour of convivialism, one did—we merely hint at the possibility of such an event—if one *did* exceed the narrow limits of strict ebriety, and open the heart with a ruby key, one had nothing to dread from the cold, or what is worse, the warm looks of ladies in the drawing-room; no fear that an imprudent word, in the amatory fondness of the fermented blood, might expose one to matrimony and settlements. There was no tame, trite medium of propriety and suppressed confidence, no bridge from board to bed, over which a false step (and your wine cup is a marvellous corruptor of ambulatory recti-

tude) might precipitate into an irrecoverable abyss of perilous communication or unwholesome truth. One's pillow became at once the legitimate and natural bourne to "the overheated brain;" and the generous rashness of the cœnatorial reveller was not damped by untimeous caution or ignoble calculation.

But "we have changed all that now:" Sobriety has become the successor of suppers; the great ocean of moral encroachment has not left us one little island of refuge. Miserable supper lovers that we are, like the native Indians of America, a scattered and daily disappearing race, we wander among strange customs, and behold the innovating and invading Dinner, spread gradually over the very space of time, in which the majesty of Supper once reigned undisputed and supreme!

"O, ye heavens, be kind,
And feel, thou earth, for this afflicted race!"

WORDSWORTH.

As he was sitting down to the table, Clarence's notice was arrested by a somewhat suspicious and unpleasing occurrence. The supper room was on the ground floor, and owing to the heat of the weather, one of the windows, facing the small garden, was left open. Through this window Clarence distinctly saw the face of a man look into the room for one instant with a prying and curious gaze, and then as instantly disappear. As no one else seemed to remark this incident, and the general attention was somewhat noisily engrossed by the subject of conversation, Clarence thought it not worth while to mention a circumstance for which the impertinence of any neighbouring servant, or drunken passer-by, might easily account. An apprehension, however, of a more unpleasant nature shot across him, as his eye fell upon the costly plate which Talbot rather ostentatiously displayed, and then glanced

to the single and aged servant, who was, besides his master, the only male inmate of the house. Nor could he help saying to Talbot in the course of the evening, that he wondered he was not afraid of hoarding so many articles of value in a house at once lonely and ill guarded.

"Ill guarded," said Talbot, rather affronted, "why, I and my servant always sleep here!"

To this Clarence thought it neither prudent nor well-bred to offer further remark.

No sooner was our party fairly seated than a wonderful change for the better seemed to operate upon them. The formalities of criticism, the professional tinge of literature melted away. Anecdotes of men succeeded strictures on books; Lord Welwyn forgot Pope and poetry, relapsed into his proper character, and became the best butt in the world. Mr. Desborough, (author of the Treatise upon Gardening,) a tall, lank, singularly ugly man, forgot one branch of

his character for another, boasted of favours from two-lips rather than success in roses, and, laying down the spade, received astonishing applause for his dexterity in taking up the *rake*. Lord St. George, a thin, well-dressed, gentleman-like personage, who had hitherto been reverentially silent, felt at last in his element, and seasoned the first glass of Burgundy with a pun. Talbot suffered his philosophy to glide into jest, and his good breeding to become the father of mirth; while the wit, whose eyes soon emulated the sparkle of the sherry, kept up the hilarity of all, by sly insinuations against each.

CHAPTER XVII.

"Meetings, or public calls, he never miss'd,
To dictate often, always to assist.
*   •   *   *
To his experience and his native sense,
He joined a bold, imperious, eloquence;
The grave, stern look of men inform'd and wise,
A full command of feature, heart, and eyes,
An awe-compelling frown, and fear-inspiring size."

CRABBE.

THE next evening Clarence, mindful of Wolfe's invitation, inquired from Warner (who repaid the contempt of the republican for the painter's calling by a similar feeling for the zealot's) the direction of the oratorical meeting, and repaired there alone. It was the most

celebrated club of that description of the day, and well worth attending, as a gratification to the curiosity, if not an improvement to the mind.

On entering, he found himself in a long room, tolerably well lighted, and still better filled. The sleepy countenances of the audience, the whispered conversation carried on at scattered intervals, the listless attitudes of some, the frequent yawns of others, the eagerness with which attention was attracted to the opening door, when it admitted some new object of interest, the desperate resolution with which some of the more energetic turned themselves towards the orator, and then, with a faint shake of the head, turned themselves again hopelessly away—were all signs that denoted that no very eloquent declaimer was in possession of the "house." It was, indeed, a singularly dull, monotonous *didactic poem-like*

sort of voice which, arising from the upper end of the room, dragged itself on towards the middle, and expired with a sighing sound before it reached the end. The face of the speaker suited his vocal powers; it was small, mean, and of a round stupidity, without any thing even in fault that could possibly command attention, or even the excitement of disapprobation: the very garments of the orator seemed dull and heavy, and, like the melancholy of Milton, had a "leaden look." Now and then some words, more emphatic than others—stones breaking, as it were, with a momentary splash, the stagnation of the heavy stream—produced from three very quiet, unhappy looking persons, seated next to the speaker, his immediate friends, three single isolated "hears!"

"The force of friendship could no farther go."

At last, the orator having *spoken through*,

suddenly stopped; the whole meeting seemed as if a weight had been taken from them, there was a general buzz of awakened energy, each stretched his limbs, and re-settled himself in his place,

"And turning to his neighbour, said, 'Rejoice!'"

A pause ensued—the chairman looked round—the eyes of the meeting followed those of their president, with an universal and palpable impatience, towards an obscure corner of the room; the pause deepened for one moment, and then was broken; a voice cried "Wolfe," and at that signal the whole room shook with the name. The place which Clarence had taken did not allow him to see the object of these cries, till he rose from his situation, and passing two rows of benches, stood forth in the middle space of the room; then went round from one to one, the general roar of applause, feet stamped, hands clapped, umbrellas set their sharp points to the

ground, and walking-sticks thumped themselves out of shape in the universal clamour. Tall, gaunt, and erect, the speaker possessed, even in the mere proportions of his frame, that physical power which never fails, in a popular assembly, to gain attention to mediocrity, and to throw dignity over faults. He looked very slowly round the room, remaining perfectly still and motionless, till the clamour of applause had entirely subsided, and every ear, Clarence's no less eagerly than the rest, was strained, and thirsting to catch the first syllables of his voice.

It was then with a low, very deep, and somewhat hoarse tone, that he began; and it was not till he had spoken for several minutes that the iron expression of his face altered, that the drooping hand was raised, and that the suppressed, yet powerful voice began to expand and vary in its volume. He had then entered upon a new department of his subject. The question was con-

nected with the English constitution, and Wolfe was now preparing to put forth, in long and blackened array, the evils of an aristocratical form of government. *Then* it was as if the bile and bitterness of years were poured forth in a terrible and stormy wrath—then his action became vehement, and his eye flashed forth unutterable fire, his voice solemn, swelling and increasing with each tone in its height and depth, filled, as *with something palpable and perceptible*, the shaking walls. The listeners—a various and unconnected group, bound by no tie of faith or of party, many attracted by curiosity, many by the hope of ridicule, some abhorring the tenets expressed, and nearly all disapproving their principles, or doubting their wisdom—the listeners, certainly not a group previously formed or moulded into enthusiasm, became rapt and earnest, their very breath forsook them; a child of six years old, who could comprehend nothing of

the discourse but the gestures and voice of the orator, sat with his hands tightly clasped, his lips dropping apart, and his cheek white and chilling with fear.

Linden had never before that night heard a public speaker; but he was of a thoughtful and rather calculating mind, and his early habits of decision, and the premature cultivation of his intellect, rendered him little susceptible, in general, to the impressions of the vulgar: nevertheless, in spite of himself, he was hurried away by the stream, and found that the force and rapidity of the speaker did not allow him even time for the dissent and disapprobation which his republican maxims and fiery denunciations perpetually excited in a mind aristocratic by prejudice as well as education. At length, after a peroration of impetuous and magnificent invective, the orator ceased.

In the midst of the applause that followed,

Clarence left the assembly ; he could not endure the thought that any duller or more commonplace speaker should fritter away the spell which yet bound and engrossed his spirit.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"At the bottom of the staircase was a small door, which gave way before Nigel as he precipitated himself upon the scene of action, a cocked pistol in one hand," &c.

Fortunes of Nigel.

The night though not utterly dark, was rendered capricious and dim, by alternate wind and rain; and Clarence was delayed in his return homeward by seeking occasional shelter from the rapid and heavy showers which hurried by. It was during one of the temporary cessations of the rain, that he reached Copperas Bower, and while he was searching in his pockets for the

key which was to admit him, he observed two men loitering about his neighbour's house. The light was not sufficient to give him more than a scattered and imperfect view of their motions. Somewhat alarmed, he stood for several moments at the door, watching them as well as he was able; nor did he enter the house, till the loiterers had left their suspicious position, and walking onwards, were hid entirely from him by the distance and darkness.

"It really is a dangerous thing for Talbot," thought Clarence, as he ascended to his apartment, "to keep so many valuables, and only one servant, and that one as old as himself too; but how coldly he looked on me, when I ventured to remonstrate. However, as I am by no means sleepy, and my room is by no means cool, I may as well open my windows, and see if those idle fellows make their re-appearance." Suiting the action to the thought, Clarence

opened his little casement, and leant wistfully out.

He had no light in his room, for none was ever left for him, and he, like ourselves, was peculiarly unhappy at a flint and tinder-box, the only means of procuring a light which the house afforded. This circumstance, however, of course enabled him the better to penetrate the dimness and haze of the night, and by the help of the fluttering lamps, he was enabled to take a general though not minute survey of the scene below.

We think we have before said, somewhere or other, that there was a small garden between Talbot's House, and Copperas Bower; this was bounded by a wall, which confined Talbot's peculiar territory of garden, and this wall, describing a parallelogram, faced also the road. It contained two entrances—one the principal adytus, in the shape of a comely iron gate, the

other a wooden door, which, being a private pass, fronted the intermediate garden before mentioned, and was exactly opposite to Clarence's window.

Linden had been more than ten minutes at his post, and had just begun to think his suspicions without foundation, and his vigil in vain, when he observed the same figures he had seen before advance slowly from the distance, and pause by the front gate of Talbot's mansion.

Alarmed and anxious, he redoubled his attention; he stretched himself as far as his safety would permit, out of the window; the lamps, agitated by the wind, which swept by in occasional gusts, refused to grant to his straining sight more than an inaccurate and unsatisfying survey. Presently a blast, more violent than ordinary, suspended as it were the falling columns of rain, and left Clarence in almost total darkness; it rolled away, and the momentary

calm which ensued, enabled him to see that one of the men was stooping by the gate, and the other standing apparently on the watch at a little distance. Another gust shook the lamps and again obscured his view: and when it had passed onward in its rapid course, the men had left the gate, and were in the garden beneath his window. They crept cautiously, but swiftly along the opposite wall, till they came to the small door we have before mentioned; here they halted, and one of them appeared to occupy himself in opening the door. Now then, fear was changed into certainty, and it seemed without doubt that the men having found some difficulty or danger in forcing the stronger or more public entrance, had changed their quarter of attack. No more time was to be lost; Clarence shouted aloud, but the high wind probably prevented the sound reaching the ears of the burglars, or at least rendered it dubious and confused.

The next moment, and before Clarence could repeat his alarm, they had opened the door, and were within the neighbouring garden, beyond his view.

Very young men, unless their experience has outstripped their youth, seldom have much presence of mind; that quality, which is the opposite to *surprise*, comes to us in those years when nothing seems to us strange or unexpected. But a much older man than Clarence might have well been at a loss to know what conduct to adopt in the situation in which our hero was placed. The visits of the watchman to that (then) obscure and ill inhabited neighbourhood, were more regulated by his indolence than his duty, and Clarence knew that it would be in vain to listen for his cry, or tarry for his assistance. He himself was utterly unarmed, but the stock-jobber had a pair of horse pistols,

and as this recollection flashed upon him, the pause of deliberation ceased.

With a swift step he descended the first flight of stairs, and pausing at the chamber door of the faithful couple, knocked upon its pannels with a loud and hasty summons. The second repetition of the noise, produced the sentence, uttered in a very trembling voice, of "Who's there?"

"It's I, Clarence Linden," replied our hero; "lose no time in opening the door."

This answer seemed to re-assure the valorous stock-jobber. He slowly undid the bolt, and turned the key.

"In Heaven's name, what do you want, Mr. Linden?" said he.

"Ay," cried a sharp voice from the more internal recesses of the chamber, "what do you want, Sir, disturbing us in the bosom of our family, and at the dead of night?"

With a rapid voice, Clarence repeated what he had seen, and requested the broker to accompany him to Talbot's house, or at least to lend him his pistols.

"He shall do no such thing," cried Mrs. Copperas. "Come here, Mr. C., and shut the door directly."

"Stop, my love," said the stock-jobber, "stop a moment."

"For God's sake," cried Clarence, "make no delay, the poor old man may be murdered by this time."

"It's no business of mine," said the stock-jobber. "If Adolphus had not broken the rattle, I would not have minded the trouble of springing it; but you are very much mistaken, if you think I am going to leave my warm bed, in order to have my throat cut."

"Then give me your pistols," cried Clarence, "I will go alone."

"I shall commit no such folly," said the stock-jobber; "if you are murdered, I may have to answer it to your friends, and pay for your burial. Besides, you owe us for your lodgings—go to your bed, young man, as I shall to mine." And so saying, Mr. Copperas proceeded to close the door.

But, enraged at the brutality of the man, and excited by the urgency of the case, Clarence did not allow him so peaceable a retreat. With a strong and fierce grasp, he seized the astonished Copperas by the throat, and shaking him violently, forced his own entrance into the sacred nuptial chamber.

"By the God that made me," cried Linden, in a savage and stern tone, for his blood was up, "I will twist your coward's throat, and save the murderer his labour, if you do not instantly give me up your pistols."

The stock-jobber was panic stricken. "Take them," he cried, in the extremest terror, "there they are on the chimney-piece, close by."

"Are they primed and loaded?" said Linden, not relaxing his gripe.

"Yes, yes!" said the stock-jobber, "loose my throat, or you will choke me!" and at that instant Clarence felt himself clasped by the invading hands of Mrs. Copperas.

"Call off your wife," said he, "or I *will* choke you!" and he tightened his hold, "and tell her to give me the pistols."

The next moment Mrs. Copperas extended the debated weapons towards Clarence. He seized them, flung, in his haste, the poor stock-jobber against the bed-post, hurried down stairs, opened the back door which led into the garden, flew across the intervening space, arrived at the door, and entering Talbot's garden,

paused to consider what was the next stepto be taken.

A person equally brave, but more cautious than Clarence, would not have left the house without alarming Mr. De Warens, even in spite of the failure with his master; but Linden only thought of the pressure of time, and the necessity of expedition, and he would have been a very unworthy hero of romance had he felt fear for two antagonists, with a brace of pistols at his command, and a high and good action in view.

After a brief but decisive halt, he proceeded rapidly round the house, in order to ascertain at which part the ruffians had admitted themselves, should they (as, indeed, there was little doubt,) have already effected their entrance.

When he came to the supper-room windows, which, as we have before had occasion to remark,

were on the ground-floor, he perceived that the shutters had been opened, and through the aperture he caught the glimpse of a moving light which was suddenly obscured. As he was about to enter, the light again flashed out: he drew back just in time, carefully screened himself behind the shutter, and through one of the chinks observed what passed within. Opposite to the window was a door which conducted to the hall and principal staircase; this door was open, and in the hall, at the foot of the stairs, Clarence saw two men, one carried a dark lanthorn, from which the light proceeded, and some tools, of the nature of which Clarence was naturally ignorant: this was a middle sized, muscular man, dressed in the rudest garb of an ordinary labourer; the other was much taller and younger, and his dress was of rather a less ignoble fashion.

"Hist! hist!" said the taller one, in a low tone, "did you not hear a noise, Ben?"

"Not a pin fall; but stow your whids, man!"

This was all that Clarence heard in a connected form; but as the wretches paused, in evident doubt how to proceed, he caught two or three detached words, which his ingenuity readily formed into sentences. "No, no!. sleeps to the left—old man above—plate chest —we must have the blunt too. Come, track up the dancers, and dowse the glim." And at the last words, the light was extinguished, and Clarence's quick and thirsting ear just caught their first steps on the stairs—they died away— and all was hushed.

It had several times occurred to Clarence to rush from his hiding-place, and fire at the ruffians: and perhaps that measure would have been the wisest he could have taken; but Clarence had never discharged a pistol in his life,

and he felt, therefore, that his aim must be uncertain enough to render a favourable position and a short distance essential requisites. Both of these were, at present, denied to him; and although he saw no weapons about the persons of the villains, yet he imagined they would not have ventured on so dangerous an expedition without preparing for the worst; and if he failed, as would have been most probable, in his two shots, he concluded that though the alarm would be given, his own fate would be inevitable.

All this was reasoning upon false premises, for housebreakers seldom or never carry fire-arms, and never stay for revenge, when their safety demands escape. But Clarence may be forgiven for not knowing the customs of house-breakers, and for not making the very best of an extremely novel and dangerous situation.

No sooner did he find himself in total

darkness, than he bitterly reproached himself for his late backwardness, and inwardly resolving not again to miss any opportunity which presented itself, he entered the window, groped along the room into the hall, and found his way very slowly, and after much circumlocution, to the staircase.

He had just gained the summit, when a loud cry broke upon the stillness: it came from a distance, and was instantly hushed; but he caught, at brief intervals, the sound of angry and threatening voices. No single gleam of light broke the darkness. Clarence bent down anxiously, in the hope that some solitary ray would escape through the crevice of the door within whose precincts the robbers were at their unholy work. But though the sounds came from the same floor as that on which he now trod, they seemed far and remote, and no other

sense but that of hearing assisted him in investigating their source.

He continued, however, to feel his way in the direction from which they proceeded, and soon found himself in a narrow gallery; the voices seemed more loud and near as he advanced; at last he distinctly heard the words,—

"Will you not confess where it is placed?"

"Indeed, indeed," replied an eager and earnest voice which Clarence recognized as Talbot's, "this is all the money I have in the house—the plate is above—my servant has the key—take it—take all—but save his life and mine."

"None of your gammon," said another and rougher voice than that of the first speaker; "we know you have more blunt than this—a paltry sum of fifty pounds, indeed."

"Hold!" cried the other ruffian, "here is a picture set with diamonds, that will do, Ben. Let go the old man."

Clarence was now just at hand, and probably from a sudden change in the position of the dark lantern within, a light abruptly broke from beneath the door, and streamed along the passage.

"No, no, no!" cried the old man, in a loud yet tremulous voice—"No, not that, any thing else, but I will defend *that* with my life."

"Ben, my lad," said the ruffian, "twist the old fool's colquarren: we have no more time to lose."

At that very moment the door was flung violently open, and Clarence Linden stood within three paces of the reprobates and their prey. The taller villain had a miniature in his hand, and the old man clung to his legs with a convulsive but impotent clasp; the other fellow had already his gripe upon Talbot's neck, and his right hand grasped a long case-knife.

With a fierce and flashing eye, and a cheek

deadly pale with internal and determinate excitation, Clarence confronted the robbers.

"I thank Heaven," said he, very slowly, "that I am not too late!" And advancing yet another step towards the shorter ruffian, who, struck mute with the suddenness of the apparition, still retained his grasp of the old man, he fired his pistol with a steady and close aim; the ball penetrated the wretch's brain, and, without sound or sigh, he fell down dead, at the very feet of his just destroyer. The remaining robber had already meditated, and a second more sufficed to accomplish his escape. He sprang towards the door: the ball whizzed beside him, but touched him not. With a safe and swift step, long inured to darkness, he fled along the passage; and Linden, satisfied with the vengeance he had taken upon his comrade, did not harass him with an unavailing pursuit.

Clarence turned to assist Talbot. The old man was stretched upon the floor insensible, but his hand grasped the miniature which the plunderer had dropped in his flight and terror, and his white and ashen lip was pressed convulsively upon the recovered treasure.

Linden raised and placed him on his bed, and while employed in attempting to revive him, the antient domestic, alarmed by the report of the pistol, came, poker in hand, to his assistance.

By little and little they recovered the object of their attention.

His eyes rolled wildly round the room, and he muttered—

" Off, off! ye shall not rob me of my only relic of her—where is it? have you got it?—my miniature!"

" It is here, Sir, it is here," said the old servant, " it is in your own hand."

Talbot's eye fell upon it; he gazed at it for

some moments, pressed it to his lips, and then, sitting erect, and looking wildly round, he seemed to awaken to his late danger and his present deliverance.

Why should we go on? the event and excitation of this chapter is past, and we will conclude it here.

CHAPTER XIX.

"Ah, fleeter far than fleetest storm or steed,
Or the death they bear,
The heart which tender thought clothes like a dove,
With the wings of care!
In the battle—in the darkness—in the need,
Shall mine cling to thee!
Nor claim one smile for all the comfort, love,
It may bring to thee."

SHELLEY.

LETTER FROM ALGERNON MORDAUNT TO ISABEL ST. LEGER.

"You told me not to write to you. You know how long, but not how uselessly I have obeyed you. Did you think, Isabel, that my love was of that worldly and common order which requires a perpetual aliment to support it?

Did you think that if you forbade the stream to flow visibly, its sources would be exhausted, and its channel dried up? This may be the passion of others, it is not mine. Months have passed since we parted, and since then you have not seen me: this letter is the first token you have received from a remembrance which cannot die. But do you think that I have not watched, and tended upon you, and gladdened my eyes with gazing at your beauty, when you have not dreamt that I was by? Ah, Isabel, your heart should have told you of it—*mine* would, had *you* been so near me.

"You receive no letters from me, it is true—think you that my hand and heart are therefore idle? No. I write to you a thousand burning lines: I pour out my soul to you: I tell you of all I suffer: my thoughts, my actions, my very dreams, are all traced upon the paper. I send them not to you, but I read them over and

TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

over, and when I come to your name, I pause, and shut my eyes, and then 'Fancy has her power,' and lo! 'you are by my side!'

"Isabel, our love has not been a holiday and joyous sentiment. We nursed it in secresy, and it grew the stronger for concealment. We have had few glimpses of sunshine, and but brief intervals of hope, but as a mother cherishes the child whom others despise, so in all our sorrows we turned to our only treasure, and while we nurtured it with hidden tears, we found in the very cause of our sadness the very strength of our consolation. It has often seemed to me a fatality, that of all men you should have loved *me*, for you were surrounded with many younger and fairer, and richer in earth's graces, and in all the honied tones and smiles

"'Which maidens dream of when they muse on love.'

"But now that you *have* loved me, it comes to

me with the force of truth that our fates cannot be dissevered, that our vows are registered, and our union ordained—for others have many objects to distract and occupy the thoughts which are once forbidden a single direction, but we have *none*. The world to you has only cold hearts and distant ties; and every thing around you repels and points your affections, your feelings, your hopes, your recollections within; and *I* am not what men love, nor for whom men's common object have interest and charm. You are to me every thing. Pleasure, splendour, ambition, all are merged into one great and eternal thought, and that is *you*.

"Others have told me, and I believed them, that I was hard, and cold, and stern—so perhaps I was before I knew you, but now I am weaker and softer than a child. There is a stone whichis of all the hardest and the chillest, but when once set on fire it is unquenchable. You smile at my

image, perhaps, and I should, if I saw it in the writing of another; for all that I have ridiculed in romance, as exaggerated, seems now to me too cool and too common place for reality.

"But this is not what I meant to write to you; you are ill, dearest and noblest Isabel, you are ill! I am the cause, and you conceal it from me; and you would rather pine away and die, than suffer *me* to lose one of those worldly advantages which are in *my* eyes but as dust in the balance—it is in vain to deny it. I heard from others of your impaired health; I have witnessed it myself. Do you remember last night, when you were in the room with your—(but I will not curse them, for they *are* your's) relations, and they made you sing—a song too which you used to sing to me, and when you came to the second stanza your voice failed you, and you burst into tears, and *they*, instead of soothing, reproached and chid you, and you answered

not, but wept on? Isabel, do you remember that a sound was heard at the window, and a groan? Even they were startled, but they thought it was the wind, for the night was dark and stormy, and they saw not that it was *I*—yes, my devoted, my generous love, it was I who gazed upon you, and from whose heart that voice of anguish was wrung; and I saw your cheek was pale and thin, and that the canker at the core had preyed upon the blossom.

"Think you, after this, that I could keep silence or obey your request? No, dearest, no! Is not my happiness your object? I have the vanity to believe so; and am *I* not the best judge how that happiness is to be secured? I tell you, I say it calmly, coldly, dispassionately—not from the imagination, not even from the heart, but solely from the *reason*—that I can bear every thing rather than the loss of *you;* and that if the evil of my love scathe and destroy

you, I shall consider and curse myself as your murderer! Save me from this extreme of misery, my—yes, *my* Isabel! I shall be at the copse where we have so often met before, to-morrow, at noon. You will meet me; and if I cannot *convince* you, I will not ask you to be *persuaded*.

"A. M."

And Isabel read this letter, and placed it at her heart, and felt less miserable than she had done for months; for though she wept, there was sweetness in the tears which the assurance of *his* love, and the tenderness of his remonstrance, had called forth. She met him—how could she refuse? and the struggle was past. Though not "convinced," she *was* "persuaded;" for her heart, which refused his reasonings, melted at his reproaches and his grief. But she would not consent to unite her fate with him at once, for the evils of that step to his interests were immediate

and near; she only suffered herself to permit their correspondence and occasional meetings, in which, however imprudent for herself, the disadvantages to her lover were distant and remote. She thought not of herself, nor of her dangers; she thought only of him: for him she trembled; for him she was the coward and the woman; for herself she had no fears, and no forethought.

And Algernon was worthy of this devoted love, and returned it as it was given. Man's love, in general, is a selfish and exacting sentiment: it demands every sacrifice, and refuses all. But the nature of Mordaunt was essentially high and disinterested, and his honour, like his love, was not that of the world: it was the ethereal and spotless honour of a lofty and generous mind, the honour which custom can neither give nor take away; and, however impatiently he bore the deferring of an union, in which he deemed himself *could* be the only sufferer, he would not

have uttered a sigh or urged a prayer for that union, could it in the minutest or remotest degree have injured or degraded *her*.

These are the hearts and natures which make life beautiful: these are the shrines which sanctify love: these are the diviner spirits for whom there is kindred and commune with every thing exalted and holy in heaven and earth. For them, Nature unfolds her hoarded poetry, and her hidden spells: for their steps are the lonely mountains, and the still woods have a murmur for their ears: for them there is strange music in the wave, and in the whispers of the light leaves, and rapture in the voices of the birds: their souls drink, and are saturated with the mysteries of the Universal Spirit, which the philosophy of old times believed to be God himself. They look upon the sky with a gifted vision, and its dove-like quiet descends and overshadows their hearts: the Moon and the Night are to them

wells of Castalian inspiration and golden dreams; and it was one of *them*, who, gazing upon the evening star, felt in the inmost sanctuary of his soul, its mysterious harmonies with his most worshipped hope, his most passionate desire, and dedicated it to—Love.

CHAPTER XX.

> "*Maria.*—Here's the brave old man's love.
> *Bianca.*—That loves the young man."
> *The Woman's Prize; or, the Tamer Tamed.*

"No, my dear Clarence, you have placed confidence in me, and it is now my duty to return it; you have told me your history and origin, and I will inform you of mine, but not yet. At present we will talk of you. You have conferred upon me what our universal love of life, makes us regard as the greatest of human obligations; and though I can bear a large burthen of gratitude, yet I must throw off an atom or two, in using my little power in *your* behalf.

Nor is this all: your history has also given you another tie upon my heart, and in granting you a *legitimate* title to my good offices, removes any scruple you might otherwise have had in accepting them.

"I have just received this letter from Lord ——, the minister for foreign affairs: you will see that he has appointed you to the office of *attaché* at ——. You will also oblige me by looking over this other letter at your earliest convenience; the trifling sum which it contains, will be repeated every quarter: it will do very well for an *attaché*: when you are an ambassador, why, we must equip you by a mortgage on Scarsdale; and now, my dear Clarence, tell me all about the Copperases."

We need not say who was the speaker of the above sentences: sentences, according to our opinion, of a very agreeable nature; nevertheless, Clarence seemed to think otherwise, for

the tears gushed into his eyes, and he was unable for several moments to reply.

"Come, my young friend," said Talbot, kindly; "I have no near relations among whom I can choose a son I like better than you, nor you any at present from whom you might select a more desirable father: consequently, you must let me look upon you as my own flesh and blood; and, as I intend to be a very strict and peremptory father, I expect the most silent and scrupulous obedience to my commands. My first parental order to you is to put up those papers, and to say nothing more about them; for I have a great deal to talk to you about upon other subjects."

And by these and similar kind hearted and delicate remonstrances, the old man gained his point. From that moment Clarence looked upon him with the grateful and venerating love of a son; and we question very much if Talbot had

really been the father of our hero, whether he would have liked so handsome a successor half so well.

The day after this arrangement, Clarence paid his debt to the Copperases, and removed to Talbot's house. With this event commenced a new era in his existence: he was no longer an outcast and a wanderer: out of alien ties he had wrought the link of a close and even paternal friendship: life, brilliant in its prospects, and elevated in its ascent, opened flatteringly before him; and the fortune and courage which had so well provided for the present, were the best omens and auguries for the future.

It remains to see how far he profited by the advantages he had won. We believe that Fate is less capricious than is imagined; that nearly all men (though this is a singular assertion) have through life, in their several grades, the same average of opportunities: it is he who can seize

and connect them, and by keen sight and ready experience, calculate on their recurrence, for whom men have their applause and Fortune her garland.

One evening, when the opening autumn had made its approaches felt, and Linden and his new parent were seated alone by a blazing fire, and had come to a full pause in their conversation, Talbot, shading his face with the friendly pages of the "Whitehall Evening Paper," as if to protect it from the heat, said—

"I told you, the other day, that I would give you at some early opportunity a brief sketch of my life. This confidence is due to you in return for yours; and since you will soon leave me, and I am an old man whose life no prudent calculation can fix, I may as well choose the present time to favour you with my confessions."

Clarence expressed and looked his interest, and the old man thus commenced.

THE HISTORY OF A VAIN MAN.

"Man is placed between two magnets,—ambition, which attracts him upwards, and vanity, which impels him to the earth. If the latter preponderate, virtue and talents are as idle instruments of ascent, as wings attached to those bodies which the laws of gravitation render impossible to soar."

Anon.

"I was the favourite of my parents, for I was quick at my lessons, and my father said I inherited my genius from him; and comely in my person, and my good looks, said my mother, came from her. So the honest pair saw in their eldest son the union of their own attractions, and thought they were making much of themselves when they lavished their caresses upon me. They had another son, poor Arthur—I think I see him now. He was a shy, quiet,

subdued boy, of a very plain personal appearance. My father and mother were vain, shewy, ambitious people of the world, and they were as ashamed of my brother as they were proud of myself. However, he afterwards entered the army, and distinguished himself highly. He died in battle, leaving an only daughter, who married, *as you know*, a nobleman of high rank. Her subsequent fate it is now needless to relate.

"Petted and pampered from my childhood, I grew up with a profound belief in my own excellencies, and a feverish and irritating desire to impress every one who came in my way with the same idea. There is a sentence in Sir William Temple, which I have often thought of with a painful conviction in its truth: 'A restlessness in men's minds to be something they are not, and have something they have not, is the root of all immorality.' At school, I was con-

fessedly the cleverest boy in my remove; and what I valued equally as much, I was the best cricketer of the best eleven. Here, then, you will say my vanity was satisfied—no such thing! There was a boy who shared my room, and was next me in the school; we were, therefore, always thrown together. He was a great, stupid, lubberly cub, equally ridiculed by the masters, and disliked by the boys: will you believe that this individual was the express and almost sole object of my envy? He was more than my rival, he was my superior; and I hated him with all the unleavened bitterness of my soul.

"I have said he was my superior—it was in one thing. He could balance a stick, nay, a cricket bat, a poker, upon his chin, and I could not; you laugh, and so can I now, but it was no subject of laughter to me then. This circumstance, trifling as it may appear to you, poisoned my enjoyment. The boy saw my

envy, for I could not conceal it; and as all fools are malicious, and most fools ostentatious, he took a particular pride and pleasure in displaying his dexterity, and 'shewing off' my discontent. You can form no idea of the extent to which this petty insolence vexed and disquieted me. Even in my sleep, the clumsy and grinning features of this tormenting imp haunted me like a spectre; my visions were nothing but chins and cricket bats, walking-sticks, sustaining themselves upon human excrescences, and pokers dancing a hornpipe upon the tip of a nose. I assure you, that I have spent hours in secret seclusion, practising to rival my hated comrade, and my face—see how one vanity quarrels with another—was little better than a map of bruises and discolorations.

"I actually became so uncomfortable as to write home, and request to leave the school. I was then about sixteen, and my indulgent father,

in granting my desire, told me, that I was too old and too advanced in my learning to go to any other academic establishment than the University. The day before I left the school I gave, as was usually the custom, a breakfast to all my friends; the circumstance of my tormentor's sharing my room, obliged me to invite him among the rest. However, I was in high spirits, and being an universal favourite with my schoolfellows, I succeeded in what was always to me an object of social ambition, and set the table on a roar; yet, when our festival was nearly expired, and I begun to allude more particularly to my approaching departure, my vanity was far more gratified, for my feelings were far more touched, by observing the regret, and receiving the good wishes of all my companions. I still recal that hour as one of the proudest and happiest of my life: but it had its immediate reverse. My evil demon put it

into my tormentor's head to give me one last parting pang of jealousy. A large umbrella happened accidentally to be in my room; Crompton, such was my schoolfellow's name, saw and seized it—' Look, Talbot,' said he, with his taunting and hideous sneer, ' you can't do this;" and placing the point of the umbrella upon his forehead, just above the eyebrow, he performed various antics round the room.

" At that moment I was standing by the fireplace, and conversing with two boys upon whom, above all others, I wished to leave a favourable impression. My foolish soreness on this one subject, had been often remarked, and as I turned, in abrupt and awkward discomposure, from the exhibition, I observed my two schoolfellows smile, and exchange looks. I am not naturally passionate, and even at that age I had, in ordinary cases, great self-command; but this observation, and the cause which led to it,

threw me off my guard. Whenever we are utterly under the command of one feeling, we cannot be said to have our reason · at that instant I literally believe I was beside myself. What! in the very flush of the last triumph that that scene would ever afford me; amidst the last regrets of my early friends, to whom I fondly hoped to bequeath a long and brilliant remembrance, to be thus bearded by a contemptible rival, and triumphed over by a pitiful, yet insulting superiority; to close my condolences with laughter; to have the final solemnity of my career, thus terminating in mockery; and ridicule substituted as an ultimate reminiscence in the place of an admiring regret; all this, too, to be effected by one so long hated, one whom I was the only being forbidden the comparative happiness of despising? I could not brook it; the insult—the insulter were too revolting. As the unhappy buffoon approached me, thrusting his distorted

face towards mine, I seized and pushed him aside, with a brief curse, and a violent hand. The sharp point of the umbrella slipped; my action gave it impetus and weight; it penetrated his eye, and—spare me, spare me the rest."

The old man bent down, and paused for a few moments before he resumed.

"Crompton lost his eye, but my punishment was as severe as his. People who are very vain, are usually equally susceptible, and they who feel one thing acutely, will so feel another. For years, ay, for many years afterwards, the recollection of my folly goaded me with the bitterest and most unceasing remorse. Had I committed murder, my conscience could scarce have afflicted me more severely. I did not regain my self-esteem, till I had repaired the injury I had done. Long after that time, Crompton was in prison, in great and overwhelming distress. I impoverished myself to

release him; I sustained him and his family till fortune rendered my assistance no longer necessary; and no triumphs were ever more sweet to me, than the sacrifices I was forced to submit to, in order to restore him to prosperity.

"It is natural to hope, that this accident had at least the effect of curing me of my fault; but it requires philosophy in yourself, or your advisers, to render remorse of future avail. How could I amend my fault, when I was not even aware of it?—Smarting under the effects, I investigated not the cause, and I attributed to irascibility, and vindictiveness, what had a deeper and more dangerous origin.

"At college, in spite of all my advantages of birth, fortune, health, and intellectual acquirements, I had many things besides the one enemy of remorse, to corrode my tranquillity of mind. I was sure to find some one to excel me in something, and this was enough to embitter my

peace. Our living Goldsmith is my favourite poet, and I perhaps insensibly venerate the genius the more, because I find something congenial to me in the infirmities of the man. *I* can fully credit the anecdótes recorded of him. *I* too could once have been jealous of a puppet handling a spontoon ; *I* too could once have been miserable, if two ladies at the theatre were more the objects of attention than myself. You, Clarence, will not despise me for this confession ; those who knew me less would. Fools ! there is no man so great as not to have some littleness more predominant than all his greatness. Our virtues are the dupes, and often only the playthings of our follies.

"I entered the world—with what advantages, and what avidity !—I smile, but it is mournfully, in looking back to that day. Though rich, high-born, and good looking, I possessed not one of these three qualities in that eminence which

could alone satisfy my love of superiority, and desire of effect. I knew this somewhat humiliating truth, for though vain, I was not conceited. Vanity, indeed, is the very antidote to conceit; for while the former makes us all *nerve* to the opinion of others, the latter is perfectly satisfied with its opinion of itself.

"I knew this truth, and as Pope, if he could not be the greatest of poets, resolved to be the most correct, so I strove, since I could not be the handsomest, the wealthiest, and the noblest of my cotemporaries, to excel them, at least, in the grace and consummateness of manner; and in this, after incredible pains, after diligent apprenticeship in the world, and intense study in the closet, I at last flattered myself that I had succeeded. Of all success, while we are yet in the flush of youth, and its capacities of enjoyment, I can imagine none more intoxicating, or gratifying, than the success of society, and I had

certainly some years of its triumph and *éclât*. I was courted, followed, flattered, and sought by the most envied and fastidious circles in England, and even in Paris; for society, so indifferent to those who disdain it, overwhelms with its gratitude—profuse though brief—those who devote themselves to its amusement. The victim to sameness and *ennui*, it offers, like the palled and luxurious Roman, a reward for a new pleasure, and as long as our industry or talent can afford it, the reward is ours. At that time, then, I reaped the full harvest of my exertions: the disappointment and vexation were of later date.

"I now come to the great era of my life—Love. Among my acquaintance, was Lady Mary Walden, a widow of high birth, and noble, though not powerful connexions. She lived about twenty miles from London, in a beautiful retreat; and though not rich, her jointure, ren-

dered ample by economy, enabled her to indulge her love of society. Her house was always as full as its size would permit, and I was among the most welcome of its visitors. She had an only daughter—even now, through the dim mists of years, that beautiful and fairy form rises still and shining before me, undimmed by sorrow, unfaded by time. Caroline Walden was the object of general admiration, and her mother, who attributed the avidity with which her invitations were accepted by all the wits and *elegants* of the day to the charms of her own conversation, little suspected the face and wit of her daughter to be the magnet of attraction. I had no idea at that time of marriage, still less could I have entertained such a notion, unless the step had greatly exalted my rank and prospects.

"The poor and powerless Caroline Walden was therefore the last person for whom I had what the jargon *des meres* terms 'serious intentions,'

However, I was struck with her exceeding loveliness, and amused by the vivacity of her manners: moreover, my vanity was excited by the hope of distancing all my competitors for the smiles of the young beauty. Accordingly I laid myself out to please, and neglected none of those subtle and almost secret attentions which, of all flatteries, are the most delicate and successful: and I succeeded. Caroline loved me with all the earnestness and devotion which characterize the love of woman. It never occurred to her that I was only trifling with those affections which it seemed so ardently my intention to win. She knew that my fortune was large enough to dispense with the necessity of fortune with my wife, and in birth she would have equalled men of greater pretensions to myself; added to this, long adulation had made her sensible, though not vain, of her attractions, and she listened with a credu-

lous ear to the insinuated flatteries I was so well accustomed to instil.

"Never shall I forget—no, though I double my present years—the shock, the wildness of despair with which she first detected the selfishness of my homage; with which she saw that I had only mocked her trusting simplicity; and that while she had been lavishing the richest treasures of her heart before the burning altars of Love, my idol had been Vanity, and my offerings deceit. She tore herself from the profanation of my grasp; she shrouded herself from my presence. All interviews with me were rejected; all my letters returned to me unopened; and though, in the repentance of my heart, I entreated, I urged her to accept vows that were no longer insincere, her pride became her punishment, as well as my own. In a moment of bitter and desperate feeling, she accepted the offers of another, and made the marriage bond a fatal

and irrevocable barrier to our reconciliation and union.

"Oh! how I now cursed my infatuation! how passionately I recalled the past! how coldly I turned from the hollow and false world, to whose service I had sacrificed my happiness, to muse and madden over the prospects I had destroyed, and the loving and noble heart I had rejected! Alas! after all, what is so ungrateful as that world for which we renounce so much? Its votaries resemble the Gymnosophistæ of old, and while they profess to make their chief end pleasure, we can only learn that they expose themselves to every torture and every pain!

"Lord Merton, the man whom Caroline now called husband, was among the wealthiest and most dissipated of his order; and two years after our separation I met once more the victim of my unworthiness, blazing in 'the full front' of courtly splendour! the leader of its gaieties, and the

cynosure of her followers. Intimate with the same society, we were perpetually cast together, and Caroline was proud of displaying the indifference towards me, which if she felt not, she had at least learnt artfully to assume. This indifference was her ruin. The depths of my evil passion were again sounded and aroused, and I resolved yet to humble the pride and conquer the coldness which galled to the very quick the morbid acuteness of my self-love. I again attached myself to her train—I bowed myself to the very dust before her. What to me were her chilling reply and disdainful civilities?—only still stronger excitements to persevere.

"I spare you and myself the gradual progress of my schemes. A woman may recover her first passion, it is true; but then she must replace it with another. That other was denied to Caroline: she had not even children to engross her thoughts and to occupy her 'prodi-

gal' affections; and the gay world, which to many become an object, was to her only an escape.

"Clarence, my triumph came! Lady Walden (who had never known our secret) invited me to her house: Caroline was there. In the same spot where we had so often stood before, and in which her earliest affections were insensibly breathed away, in that same spot, my arm encircled her, and I drew from her colourless and trembling lips the confession of her weakness, the restored and pervading power of my remembrance.

"But Caroline was a proud and virtuous woman: even while her heart betrayed her, her mind resisted; and in the very avowal of her unconquered attachment, she renounced and discarded me for ever. I was not an ungenerous though a vain man; but my generosity was wayward, tainted and imperfect. I could

have borne a separation; I could have severed myself from her; I could have flown to the uttermost parts of the earth; I could have hoarded there my secret, yet unextinguished love, and never disturbed her quiet by a murmur; but then the fiat of separation must have come from *me*. My vanity could not bear that *her* lips should reject me; that *my* part was not to be the nobility of sacrifice, but the submission of resignation. However, my better feelings were aroused, and though I could not stifle, I concealed my selfish repinings. We parted: she returned to town, I buried myself in the country; and amidst the literary studies to which, though by fits and starts, I was passionately devoted, I endeavoured to forget my ominous and guilty love.

"But I was then too bound to the world not to be perpetually reminded of its events. My retreat was thronged with occasional migrators from London; my books were mingled with

the news and scandal of the day. All spoke to me of Lady Merton; not as I loved to picture her to myself, pale and sorrowful, and brooding over my image; but gay, dissipated, the dispenser of smiles, the prototype and deity of joy. I contrasted this account of her, with the melancholy and gloom of my own feelings, and I resented as an insult to myself, that which I ought to have rejoiced at, as an engrossment of reflection, for her.

"In this angry and fretful mood, I returned to London. My empire was soon resumed; and now, Linden, comes the most sickening part of my confessions. Vanity is a growing and insatiable disease: what seems to its desires as wealth to-day, to-morrow it rejects as poverty. I was at first contented to know that I was beloved; by degrees, slow, yet sure, I desired that others should know it also. I longed to display my power over the cele-

brated and courted Lady Merton; and to put the last crown to my reputation and importance. The envy of others, is the food of our own self-love. Oh, you know not, you dream not, of the galling mortifications to which a proud woman, whose love commands her pride, is subjected. I imposed upon Caroline the most humiliating, the most painful tasks; I would allow her to see none but those I pleased; to go to no place, where I withheld my consent; and I hesitated not to exert and testify my power over her affections, in proportion to the publicity of the opportunity.

"Yet, with all this littleness, would you believe that I loved Caroline with the most ardent and engrossing passion? I have paused behind her, in order to kiss the ground she trod on; I have staid whole nights beneath her window, to catch one glimpse of her passing form, even though I had spent hours of the day time in

her society; and though my love burned and consumed me, like a fire, I would not breathe a single wish against her innocence, or take advantage of my power to accomplish what I knew, from her virtue and pride, no atonement could possibly repay. Such are the inconsistencies of the heart, and such, while they prevent our perfection, redeem us from the utterness of vice. Never, even in my wildest days, was I blind to the glory of virtue, yet never, till my latest years, have I enjoyed the faculty to avail myself of my perception. I resembled the mole, which by Boyle is supposed to possess the idea of light, but to be unable to comprehend the objects on which it shines.

"Among the varieties of my prevailing sin, was a weakness, common enough to worldly men. While I ostentatiously played off the love I had *excited*, I could not bear to show the love I *felt*. In our country, and perhaps, though in a less degree, in all other highly artificial states,

enthusiasm, or even feeling of any kind, is ridiculous; and I could not endure the thought that my treasured and secret affections should be dragged from their retreat, to be cavilled and carped at by

"'Every beardless, vain comparative.'

"This weakness brought on the catastrophe of my love; for, mark me, Clarence, it is through *our weaknesses that our vices are punished*. One night I went to a masquerade; and while I was sitting in a remote corner, three of my acquaintances, whom I recognized, though they knew it not, approached and rallied me upon my *romantic* attachment to Lady Merton. One of them was a woman of a malicious and sarcastic wit; the other two were men whom I disliked, because their pretensions interfered with mine; they were diners out, and anecdote-mongers. Stung to the quick by their sarcasms and laughter, I replied in a train of mingled arrogance, and jest; at last I spoke

slightingly of the person in question; and these profane and false lips dared not only to disown the remotest love to that being who was more to me than heaven and earth, but even to speak of herself with ridicule, and her affection with disdain.

"In the midst of this, I turned and beheld, within hearing, a figure which I knew upon the moment. O God! the burning shame and agony of that glance!—It raised its mask—I saw that blanched cheek, and that trembling lip; and I knew that the iron had indeed entered into her soul.

"Clarence, I never beheld her again alive. Within a week from that time she was a corpse. She had borne much, suffered much, and murmured not; but this shock pressed too hard, came too home, and from the hand of him for whom she would have sacrificed all! I stood by her in death; I beheld my work; and I

turned away, a wanderer and a pilgrim upon the face of the earth. Verily, I have had my reward."

The old man paused, violently affected; and Clarence, who could offer him no consolation, did not break the silence. In a few minutes Talbot continued—

"From that time, the smile of woman was nothing to me; I seemed to grow old in a single day. Life lost to me all its objects. A dreary and desert blank stretched itself before me, the sounds of creation had only in my ears one voice—the past, the future, one image. I left my country for twenty years, and lived an idle and hopeless man in the various courts of the continent.

"At the age of fifty I returned to England; the wounds of the past had not disappeared, but they were scarred over; and I longed, like the rest of my species, to have an object in view.

At that age, if we have seen much of mankind, and possess the talents to profit by our knowledge, we must be one of two sects: a politician, or a philosopher. My time was not yet arrived for the latter, so I resolved to become the former; but this was denied me, for my vanity had assumed a different shape. It is true that I cared no longer for the reputation women can bestow; but I was eager for the applause of men, and I did not like the long labour necessary to attain it. I wished to make a short road to my object, and I eagerly followed every turn but the right one, in the hopes of its leading me sooner to my goal.

"The great characteristic of a vain man, in contradistinction to an ambitious man, and his eternal obstacle to a high and honourable fame, is this: he requires for any expenditure of trouble too speedy a reward; he cannot wait for years, and climb, step by step, to a lofty

object: whatever he attempts, he must seize at a single grasp. Added to this, he is incapable of an exclusive attention to one end; the universality of his cravings is not contented, unless it devours all; and thus he is perpetually doomed to fritter away his energies by grasping at the trifling baubles within his reach, and in gathering the worthless fruit, which a single sun can mature.

"This, then, was my fault, and the cause of my failure. I could no tgive myself up to finance, nor puzzle through the intricacies of commerce: even the common parliamentary drudgeries of constant attendance and late hours, were insupportable to me; and so after two or three 'splendid orations,' as my friends termed them, I was satisfied with the puffs of the pamphleteers, and closed my political career. I was now then the wit and the conversationalist. With my fluency of speech and variety of infor-

mation these were easy distinctions; and the popularity of a dinner table, or the approbation of a literary coterie, consoled me for the more public and more durable applause I had resigned.

"But even this gratification did not last long. I fell ill; and the friends who gathered round the wit fled from the valetudinarian. This disgusted me, and when I was sufficiently recovered, I again returned to the continent. But I had a fit of misanthropy and solitude upon me, and so it was not to courts and cities, the scenes of former gaieties, that I repaired; on the contrary, I hired a house on one of the most sequestered of the Swiss lakes, and avoiding the living, I surrendered myself, without interruption or control, to commune with the dead. I surrounded myself with books, and pored with a curious and searching eye into those works which treat particularly upon 'man.' My passions were

over, my love of pleasure and society was dried up, and I had now no longer the obstacles which forbid us to be wise; I unlearnt the precepts my manhood had acquired, and in my old age I commenced philosopher; Religion lent me her aid, and by her holy lamp my studies were conned and my hermitage illumined.

"There are certain characters which, in the world, are evil, and in seclusion are good: Rousseau, whom I know well, is one of them. These persons are of a morbid sensitiveness, which is perpetually galled by collision with others. In short, they are under the dominion of VANITY; and that vanity, never satisfied, and always restless in the various competitions of society, produces 'envy, malice, hatred, and all uncharitableness;' but, in solitude, the good and benevolent dispositions with which our self-love no longer interferes, have room to expand and ripen, without being cramped by opposing inte-

rests: this will account for many seeming discrepancies in character. There are also some men, in whom old age supplies the place of solitude, and Rousseau's antagonist and mental antipodes, Voltaire, is of this order. The pert, the malignant, the arrogant, the lampooning author, in his youth and manhood, has become, in his old age, the mild, the benevolent, and the venerable philosopher. Nothing is more absurd than to receive the characters of great men so implicitly upon the word of a biographer; and nothing can be less surprising than our eternal disputes upon individuals; for no man throughout life is the same being, and each season of our existence contradicts the characteristics of the last.

"And now, in my solitude and my old age, a new spirit entered within me: the game in which I had engaged so vehemently was over for me;

and I joined to my experience as a player, my coolness as a spectator; I no longer struggled with my species, and I began insensibly to love them. I established schools, and founded charities; and, in secret, but active services to mankind, I employed my exertions, and lavished my desires.

"From this amendment I date the peace of mind and elasticity of spirit which I now enjoy; and in my later years, the happiness which I pursued in my youth and maturity so hotly, yet so ineffectually, has flown unsolicited to my breast.

"About five years ago, I came again to England, with the intention of breathing my last in the country which gave me birth. I retired to my family home, I endeavoured to divert myself in agricultural improvements, and my rental was consumed in speculation; this did

not please me long, I sought society—society in Yorkshire! You may imagine the result: I was out of my element, the mere distance from the metropolis, from all genial companionship, sickened me with a vague feeling of desertion and solitude; for the first time in my life I felt my age and my celibacy. Once more I returned to town, a complaint attacked my lungs, the physicians recommended the air of this neighbourhood, and I chose the residence I now inhabit. Without being exactly in London, I can command its advantages, and obtain society as a recreation, without buying it by restraint. I am not fond of new faces, nor any longer covetous of show; my old servant therefore contented me: for the future, I shall, however, satisfy your fears, remove to a safer habitation, and obtain a more numerous guard. It is, at all events, a happiness to me, that fate, in casting me here,

and exposing me to something of danger, has raised up, in you, a friend for my old age, and selected from this great universe of strangers, one being to convince my heart that it has not outlived affection. My tale is done; may you profit by its moral."

When Talbot said that our characters were undergoing a perpetual change, he should have made this reservation; the one ruling passion remains to the last: it modifies, it is true, but it never departs; and it is these modifications which do, for the most part, shape out the channels of our change. As Helvetius has beautifully expressed it, we resemble those vessels which the waves still carry towards the south, when the north wind has ceased to blow;

but in our old age, this passion having little to feed on, becomes sometimes dormant and inert, and then our good qualities rise, as it were from an incubus, and have their sway.

Yet these cases are not common, and Talbot was a remarkable instance, for he was a remarkable man. His mind had not slept while the age advanced, and thus it had swelled as it were from the bondage of its earlier passions and prejudices. But little did he think, in the blindness of self-delusion—though it was so obvious to Clarence, that he could have smiled if he had not rather inclined to weep at the frailties of human nature—little did he think that the vanity which had cost him so much, remained "a monarch still," undeposed alike by his philosophy, his religion, or his remorse; and that, debarred by circumstances from all wider and more dangerous field, it still lavished itself upon trifles unworthy of his powers, and puerilities

dishonouring his age. Folly is a courtezan whom we ourselves seek, whose favours we solicit at an enormous price; and who, like Lais, finds philosophers at her door, scarcely less frequently than the rest of mankind!

CHAPTER XXI.

"*Mrs. Trinket.*—What d'ye buy—what d'ye lack, Gentlemen? Gloves, ribbons, and essences—ribbons, gloves, and essences."

ETHEREGE.

"AND so, my love," said Mr. Copperas, one morning at breakfast, to his wife, his right leg being turned over his left, and his dexter hand conveying to his mouth a huge morsel of buttered cake, "and so, my love, they say that the old fool is going to leave the jackanapes all his fortune?"

"They do say so, Mr. C.; for my part I am quite out of patience with the art of the

young man; I dare say he is no better than he should be; he always had a sharp look, and, for aught I know, there may be more in that robbery than you or I dreamt of, Mr. Copperas. It was a pity," continued Mrs. Copperas, upbraiding her lord with true matrimonial tenderness and justice, for the *consequences* of his having acted from *her advice*—" it was a pity, Mr. C., that you should have refused to lend him the pistols to go to the old fellow's assistance, for then who knows but——"

" I might have converted them into *pocket* pistols," interrupted Mr. C., " and not have over-shot the mark, my dear—ha, ha, ha!"

" Lord, Mr. Copperas, you are always making a joke of every thing."

" No, my dear, for once I'm making a joke of nothing."

" Well, I declare it's shameful," cried Mrs. Copperas, still following up her own indignant

meditations, "and after taking such notice of Adolphus, too, and all!"

"Notice, my dear! mere words," returned Mr. Copperas, "mere words, like ventilators, which make a great deal of air, but *never raise the wind;* but don't put yourself in a *stew*, my love, for the doctors say that *copperas in a stew* is poison."

At this moment, Mr. De Warens, throwing open the door, announced Mr. Brown; that gentleman entered, with a sedate, but cheerful air. "Well, Mrs. Copperas, your servant; any table linen wanted? Mr. Copperas, how do you do? I can give you a hint about the stocks. Master Copperas, you are looking bravely; don't you think he wants some new pinbefores, Ma'am? But Mr. Clarence Linden, where is he? not up yet, I dare say? Ah, the present generation is a generation of sluggards, as his worthy *aunt*, Mrs. Minden, used to say."

"I am sure," said Mrs. Copperas, with a disdainful toss of the head, "I know nothing about the young man. He has left us: a very mysterious piece of business indeed, Mr. Brown; and now I think of it, I can't help saying that we were by no means pleased with your introduction; and by the by, the chairs you bought for us at the sale were a mere take in, so slight, that Mr. Walruss broke two of them by only sitting down."

"Indeed, Ma'am!" said Mr. Brown, with expostulating gravity; "but then Mr. Walruss is so very corpulent. But the young gentleman, what of him?" continued the broker, artfully turning from the point in dispute.

"Lord, Mr. Brown, don't ask me: it was the unluckiest step we ever made to admit him into the bosom of our family; quite a viper, I assure you; absolutely robbed poor Adolphus."

"Lord help us!" said Mr. Brown with a

look which "cast a *browner* horror," o'er the room, "who would have thought it; and such a pretty young man!"

"Well," said Mr. Copperas, who, occupied in finishing the buttered cake, had hitherto kept silence, "I must be off, Tom—I mean De Warens—have you stopped the coach?"

"Yees, Sir."

"And what coach is it?"

"It be the Swallow, Sir."

"Oh, very well; and now, Mr. Brown, having swallowed *in the roll*, I will e'en *roll in the Swallow*—Ha, ha, ha!"—"At any rate," thought Mr. Copperas, as he descended the stairs, "*he* has not heard that before."

"Ha, ha!" gravely chuckled Mr. Brown; "what a very facetious, lively gentleman Mr. Copperas is. But touching this ungrateful young man, Mr. Linden, Ma'am?"

"Oh don't teaze me, Mr. Brown, I must see fter my domestics: ask Mr. Talbot, the old

miser, in the next house, the *havarr*, as the French say."

"Well, now," said Mr. Brown, following the good lady down stairs—"how distressing for me—and to say that he was Mrs. Minden's nephew, too!"

But Mr. Brown's curiosity was not so easily satisfied, and finding Mr. De Warens leaning over the 'front' gate, and 'pursuing with wistful eyes' the departing 'Swallow,' he stopped, and accosting him, soon possessed himself of the facts that "old Talbot had been robbed and murdered, but that Mr. Linden had brought him to life again; and that old Talbot had given him a hundred thousand pounds, and adopted him as his son; and that how Mr. Linden was going to be sent to foreign parts, as an ambassador, or governor, or great person; and that how meester and meesess were quite 'cut up' about it."

All these particulars having been duly depo-

sited in the mind of Mr. Brown, they produced an immediate desire to call upon the young gentleman, who, to say nothing of his being so very nearly related to his old customer, Mrs. Minden, was always so very great a favourite with *him*, Mr. Brown.

Accordingly, as Clarence was musing over his approaching departure, which was now very shortly to take place, he was somewhat startled by the apparition of Mr. Brown—" Charming day, Sir—charming day," said the friend of Mrs. Minden—" just called in to congratulate you. I have a few articles, Sir, to present you with—quite rarities, I assure you—quite pre sents I may say. I picked them up at a sale of the late Lady Waddilove's most valuable effects. They are just the things, Sir, for a gentleman going on a foreign mission. A most curious ivory chest, with an Indian padlock, to hold confidential letters—belonged formerly, Sir, to

the Great Mogul; and a beautiful diamond snuff-box, Sir, with a picture of Louis XIV. on it, prodigiously fine, and will look so loyal too; and, Sir, if you have any old aunts in the country to send a farewell present to, I have some charmingly fine cambric, a superb Dresden tea set, and a lovely little 'ape,' stuffed by the late Lady W. herself."

"My good Sir," began Clarence.

"Oh, no thanks, Sir—none at all—too happy to serve a relation of Mrs. Minden—always proud to keep up family connections. You will be at home to-morrow, Sir, at eleven—I will look in—your most humble servant, Mr. Linden." And almost upsetting Talbot, who had just entered, Mr. Brown bowed himself out.

CHAPTER XXII.

> "We talked with open heart and tongue,
> Affectionate and true;
> A pair of friends, though I was young
> And Matthew seventy-two."
>
> WORDSWORTH.

MEANWHILE the young artist proceeded rapidly with his picture. Devoured by his enthusiasm, and utterly engrossed by the sanguine anticipation of a fame which appeared to him already won, he allowed himself no momentary interval of relaxation; his food was eaten by starts, and without stirring from his easil; his sleep was broken and brief by feverish dreams;

he no longer roved with Clarence, when the evening threw her shade over his labours; all air and exercise he utterly relinquished; shut up in his narrow chamber he passed the hours in a fervid and passionate self-commune, which even in suspense from his work, riveted his thoughts the closer to its object. All companionship, all intrusion, he bore with an irritability and impatience that had hitherto seemed perfectly opposite to his gentle and pensive nature. Even Clarence found himself excluded from the presence of his friend; even his nearest relation, who doated on the very ground which he hallowed with his footstep, was banished from the haunted sanctuary of the painter; from the most placid of human beings, Warner seemed to have grown the most morose. Alas! there is a fever of the soul to which that of the frame is ice. A fever which resembles the burning stream of a volcano, that, arising when

least suspected from the bosom of the quiet soil, creates even in destroying, and hardens over a new stratum utterly opposite to the nature of the first.

Want of rest, abstinence from food, the impatience of the strained spirit and jaded nerves, all contributed to waste the health, while they excited the genius of the artist. A crimson spot never before seen there, burnt in the centre of his pale cheek; his eye glowed with a brilliant but unnatural fire; his features grew sharp and attenuated; his bones worked from his whitening and transparent skin; and the soul and frame turned from their proper and kindly union, seemed contesting, with fierce struggles, which should obtain the mastery and the triumph.

But neither his new prospects, nor the coldness of his friend, diverted the warm heart of Clarence from meditating how he could most

effectually serve the artist, before he departed from the country. It was a peculiar object of desire to Warner, that the most celebrated painter of the day, who was in terms of intimacy with Talbot, and who with the benevolence of real superiority was known to take a keen interest in the success of more youthful and inexperienced genius;—it was an object of peculiar desire to Warner, that Sir Joshua Reynolds should see his picture before it was completed; and Clarence, aware of this wish, easily obtained from Talbot a promise that it should be effected. That was the least service of his zeal: touched by the earnestness of Linden's friendship, anxious to oblige in any way his preserver, and well pleased himself to be the patron of merit, Talbot readily engaged to obtain for Warner whatever the attention and favour of high rank or literary distinction could bestow. "As for his picture," said Talbot, (when, the evening

before Clarence's departure, the latter was renewing the subject,) "I shall myself become the purchaser, and at a price which will enable our friend to afford leisure and study for the completion of his next attempt; but even at the risk of offending your friendship, and disappointing your expectations, I will frankly tell you, that I think Warner overrates, perhaps not his talents, but his powers; not his ability of doing something great hereafter, but his capacity of doing it at present. In the pride of his art, he has shewn me many of his designs, and I am somewhat of a judge: they want experience, cultivation, taste, and above all, a deeper study of the Italian masters. They all have the defects of a feverish colouring, an ambitious desire of effect, a wavering and imperfect outline, an ostentatious and unnatural strength of light and shadow; they shew, it is true, a genius of no ordinary stamp, but one ill regulated, inex-

perienced, and utterly left to its own suggestions for a model. However, I am glad he wishes for the opinion of one necessarily the best judge; let him bring the picture here by Thursday, on that day my friend has promised to visit me; and now let us talk of you and your departure."

The intercourse of men of different ages is essentially unequal: it must always partake more or less of advice on one side and deference on the other; and although the easy and unpedantic turn of Talbot's conversation made his remarks rather entertaining, than obviously admonitory, yet they were necessarily tinged by his experience, and regulated by his interest in the fortunes of his young friend.

"My dearest Clarence," said he, affectionately, "we are about to bid each other a long farewell. I will not damp your hopes and anticipations by insisting on the little chance there

is that you should ever see me again. You are about to enter upon the great world, and have within you the desire and the power of success; let me flatter myself that you can profit by my experience. Among the colloquia of Erasmus, there is a very entertaining dialogue between Apicius and a man, who, desirous of giving a feast to a very large and miscellaneous party, comes to consult the epicure what will be the best means to give satisfaction to all. Now you shall be this Spudœus (so, I think, he is called,) and I will be Apicius; for the world, after all, is nothing more than a great feast of different strangers with different tastes, and of different ages, and we must learn to adapt ourselves to their minds, and our temptations to their passions, if we wish to fascinate or even to content them. It seems strange enough that a free country like ours, where it is important to please every class, should, of all modern nations, appear the

most rather zealously to condemn, than merely to neglect the manners and address which, like learning, are so often better than house and land. Very different was it in that ancient Athens, now so much the object of cant and emulation: there the most celebrated citizens were the finest gentlemen. But, to return: as the sea of manners is so unexplored, and I (with the exception of my friend Lord Chesterfield, and, some years ago, of the courtly Bolingbroke) am the only Englishman who, to my knowledge, ever attempted a chart of those unknown deeps, suffer me to call your attention to the hints and maxims which I have in this paper amused myself with drawing up for your instruction: take, and look over them at your leisure. Write to me from time to time, and I will, in replying to your letters, give you the best advice in my power. For the rest, my dear boy, I have only to request that you will

be frank, and I, in my turn, will promise that, when I cannot assist I will never reprove. And now, Clarence, as the hour is late, and you leave us early to-morrow, I will no longer detain you. God bless, and keep you. You are going to enjoy life—I to anticipate death: so that you can find in me little congenial to yourself; but, as the good Pope said to our protestant countryman, 'whatever the difference between us, I know well that an old man's blessing is never without its value.' "

As Clarence clasped his benefactor's hand, the tears gushed from his eyes. Is there one being, stubborn as the rock to misfortune, whom kindness does not affect? For our part, it seems to us to come with a double grace and tenderness from the old; it seems in them the hoarded and long purified benevolence of years; as if it had survived and conquered the baseness and selfishness of the ordeal it had passed; as if

the winds which had broken the form, had swept in vain across the heart, and the frost which had chilled the blood and whitened the thin locks, had possessed no power over the warm tide of the affections. It is the triumph of nature over art: it is the voice of the angel which is yet within us. Nor is this all; the tenderness of age is twice blessed—blessed in its trophies over the obduracy of encrusting and withering years, blessed because it is tinged with the sanctity of the grave; because it tells us that the heart will blossom even upon the precincts of the tomb, and flatters us with the inviolacy and immortality of love.

CHAPTER XXIII.

> "Cannot I create,
> Cannot I form, cannot I fashion forth
> Another world, another universe?"
>
> KEATES.

THE next morning Clarence, in his way out of town, directed his carriage (the last and not the least acceptable present from Talbot) to stop at Warner's door. Although it was scarcely sunrise, the aged grandmother of the artist was stirring and opened the door to the early visitor. Clarence passed her with a brief salutation—hurried up the narrow stairs, and found himself in the artist's chamber. The windows were closed,

and the air of the room was confined and hot. A few books, chiefly of history and poetry, stood in confused disorder upon some shelves opposite the window. Upon a table beneath them lay a flute, once the cherished recreation of the young painter, but now long neglected and disused. His dressing gown (the only garb he had worn for weeks) lay upon a chair beside the bed; and placed exactly opposite to Warner, so that his eyes might open upon his work, was the high prized and already more than half-finished picture.

Clarence bent over the bed; the cheek of the artist rested upon his arm in an attitude unconsciously picturesque; the other arm was tossed over the coverlid, and Clarence was shocked to see how wan and emaciated it had become. But ever and anon the lips of the sleeper moved restlessly, and words, low and inarticulate, broke out. Sometimes he started abruptly, and a bright,

but evanescent flush darted over his faded and hollow cheek; and once the fingers of the thin hand, which lay upon the bed, expanded, and suddenly closed in a firm and almost painful grasp; it was then that, for the first time, the words of the artist became distinct.

"Ay, ay," said he, "I have thee, I have thee at last. Long, very long, thou hast burnt up my heart like fuel, and mocked me, and laughed at my idle efforts; but now, now I have thee. Fame, Honour, Immortality, whatever thou art called, I have thee, and thou canst not escape; but it is almost too late!" And as if wrung by some sudden pain, the sleeper turned heavily round, groaned audibly, and awoke.

"My friend," said Clarence, soothingly, and taking his hand, "I have come to bid you farewell. I am just setting off for the continent, but I could not leave England without once more seeing you. I have good news too, for you."

And Clarence proceeded to repeat Talbot's wish that Warner should bring the picture to his house on the following Thursday, that Sir Joshua might inspect it. He added also, in terms the flattery of which his friendship could not resist exaggerating, Talbot's desire to become the purchaser of the picture.

"Yes," said the artist, as his eye glanced delightedly over his labour; "yes, I believe when it is once seen there will be many candidates."

"No doubt," answered Clarence; "and for that reason you cannot blame Talbot for wishing to forestall all other competitors for the prize;" and then continuing the encouraging nature of the conversation, Clarence enlarged upon the new hopes of his friend, besought him to take time, to spare his health, and not to injure both himself and his performance by over anxiety and hurry. Clarence concluded, by retailing Talbot's assurance, that in all cases and circum-

stances he (Talbot) considered himself pledged to be Warner's supporter and friend.

With something of impatience, mingled with pleasure, the painter listened to all these details of the warm hearted and affectionate Clarence; nor was it to Linden's zeal, or to Talbot's generosity, but rather to the excess of his own merit, that he secretly attributed the brightening prospect afforded him.

The indifference Warner's naturally kind disposition evinced at parting with a friend who had always taken so strong an interest in his behalf, and whose tears at that moment contrasted forcibly enough with the apathetic coldness of his own farewell, was a remarkable instance how acute vividness on one point will deaden feeling on all others. Occupied solely and burningly with one intense thought, which was to him—love, friendship, health, peace, wealth, Warner could not excite feelings, languid and exhausted

with many and fiery conflicts, to objects of minor interest, and perhaps he inwardly rejoiced that his musings and his study would henceforth be sacred even from friendship.

Deeply affected, for his nature was exceedingly unselfish, generous and susceptible, Clarence tore himself away, placed in the grandmother's hand a considerable portion of the sum he had received from Talbot, hurried into his carriage, and found himself on the high road to fortune, pleasure, distinction, and the continent. From him we will for some time part: when he next appears, it will be upon a new stage, in which ambition will be more open to energy, and honour to desert.

But while Clarence, despite of every advantage before him, hastened to a court of dissipation and pleasure, with feelings, in which regretful affection for those he had left, darkened his worldly hopes, and mingled with the sanguine

anticipations of youth, Warner, poor, low-born, wasted with sickness, destitute of friends, shut out by his temperament from the pleasures of his age, burned with hopes far less alloyed than those of Clarence, and found in them for the sacrifice of all else, not only a recompense but a triumph.

Thursday came. Warner had made one request of Talbot, which had with difficulty been granted: it was that he himself might, unseen, be the auditor of the great painter's criticisms, and that Sir Joshua should be perfectly unaware of his presence. It had been granted with difficulty, because Talbot wished to spare Warner the pain of hearing remarks, which he felt would be likely to fall far short of the sanguine self-elation of the young artist; and it *had* been granted, because Talbot imagined, that even should this be the case, the pain would be more than counterbalanced by the salutary effect it

might produce. Alas! vanity calculates but poorly upon the vanity of others! What a virtue we should distil from frailty, what a world of pain we should save our brethren, if we would suffer our own weaknesses to be the measure of theirs!

Thursday came; the painting was placed by the artist's own hand in the most favourable light; a curtain, hung behind it, served as a screen for Warner, who, retiring to his hiding-place, surrendered his heart to delicious forebodings of the critic's wonder, and golden anticipations of the future destiny of his darling work. Not a fear dashed the full and smooth cup of his self-enjoyment; he had lain awake the whole of the night, in restless and joyous impatience for the morrow. At day-break he had started from his bed, he had unclosed his shutters, he had hung over his picture with a fondness, greater, if possible, than he had ever known

before; like a mother, he felt as if his own partiality was but a part of an universal tribute: and as his aged relative turned her dim eyes to the painting, and in her innocent idolatry, rather of the artist than his work, praised, and expatiated, and foretold, his heart whispered—"If it wring this worship from ignorance, what will be the homage of science?"

He who first laid down the now hacknied maxim, that diffidence is the companion of genius, knew very little of the workings of the human heart. True, there may have been a few such instances, and it is probable that in this maxim, as in most, the exception made the rule. But what could ever reconcile Genius to its sufferings, its sacrifices, its fevered inquietudes, the intense labour which can alone produce what the shallow world deems the giant offspring of a momentary inspiration; what could ever reconcile it to these, but the haughty and unquench-

able consciousness of internal power; the hope which has the fulness of certainty, that in proportion to the toil is the reward; the sanguine and impetuous anticipation of glory, which bursts the boundaries of time and space, and ranges with a prophet's rapture the immeasurable regions of immortality? Rob Genius of its confidence, of its lofty self-esteem, and you clip the wings of the eagle: you domesticate, it is true, the wanderer you could not hitherto comprehend, in the narrow bounds of your household affections; you abase and tame it more to the level of your ordinary judgments—the walled in and petty circumference of your little and common-place moralities—but you take from it the power to soar; the hardihood which was content to brave the thunder cloud and build its eyrie on the rock, for the proud triumph of rising above its kind, and contemplating with a closer eye the majesty of heaven.

But if something of presumption is a part of the very essence of genius, in Warner it was doubly natural, for he was still in the heat and flush of a design, whose defects he had not yet had the leisure to examine; and his talents, self-taught, and self-modelled, had never received either the excitement of emulation or the chill of discouragement from the study of the master-pieces of his art.

The painter had not been long alone in his concealment before he heard steps, his heart beat violently, the door opened, and he saw through a small hole which he had purposely made in the curtain, a man with a benevolent and prepossessing countenance, whom he instantly recognized as *Sir Joshua Reynolds*, enter the room, accompanied by Talbot. They walked up to the picture; the painter examined it closely, and in perfect silence. "Silence," thought Warner, "is the best homage of admiration;"

but he trembled with impatience to hear the admiration confirmed by words,—those words came too soon.

"It is the work of a clever man, certainly," said Sir Joshua; "*but*," (terrible monosyllable,) "of one utterly unskilled in the grand principles of his art: look here, and here, and here, for instance;" and the critic, perfectly unconscious of the torture he inflicted, proceeded to point out the errors of the work. Oh! the agony, the withering agony of that moment to the ambitious Artist!—In vain he endeavoured to bear up against the judgment—in vain he endeavoured to persuade himself that it was the voice of envy which in those cold, measured, *defining* accents, fell like drops of poison upon his heart. He felt at once, and, as if by a magical inspiration, the truth of the verdict; the scales of self-delusion fell from his eyes; by a hideous mockery, a kind of terrible pantomime, his goddess seemed

at a word, a breath, transformed into a monster: life which had been so lately concentred into a single hope, seemed now, at once and for ever, cramped, curdled, blistered into a single disappointment.

"But," said Talbot, who had in vain attempted to arrest the criticisms of the painter, (who, very deaf at all times, was at that time in particular engrossed by the self-satisfaction always enjoyed by one expatiating on his favourite topic), "but," said Talbot, in a louder voice, "you own there is great genius in the design?"

"Certainly, there is genius," replied Sir Joshua, in a tone of calm and complacent good nature. "But what is genius without culture? You say the artist is young, very young; let him take time—I do not say let him attempt a humbler walk, let him persevere in the lofty one he has chosen—but let him first retrace every step

he has taken; let him devote days, months, years, to the most diligent study of the immortal masters of the divine art, before he attempts (to exhibit, at least,) another historical picture. He has mistaken altogether the nature of invention: a fine invention is nothing more than a fine deviation from, or enlargement on a fine model; imitation, if noble and general, ensures the best hope of originality. Above all, let your young friend, if he can afford it, visit Italy, and copy in Rome those works which have given to Rome a mightier empire than the first—the empire of the soul!"

"He *shall* afford it," said Talbot, kindly, "for he shall have whatever advantages I can procure him; but you see the picture is only half completed—he could alter it!"

"*He had better burn it*," replied the painter, with a gentle smile.

And Talbot, in benevolent despair, hurried

his visitor out of the room. He soon returned to seek and console the artist, but the artist was gone; the despised, the fatal picture, the blessing and curse of so many anxious and wasted hours, had vanished also with its creator.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"What is this soul, then? Whence
Came it?—It does not seem my own, and I
Have no self passion or identity!
Some fearful end must be.

* * * * *

There never lived a mortal man, who bent
His appetite beyond his natural sphere,
But starved and died."

KEATE'S *Endymion.*

On entering his home, Warner pushed aside, for the first time in his life with disrespect, his aged and kindly relation, who, as if in mockery of the unfortunate artist, stood prepared to welcome and congratulate his return. Bearing his picture in his arms, he rushed up stairs,

hurried into his room, and locked the door. Hastily he tore aside the cloth which had been drawn over the picture; hastily and tremblingly he placed it upon the frame accustomed to support it, and then, with a long, long, eager, searching, scrutinizing glance, he surveyed the once beloved mistress of his worship. Presumption, vanity, exaggerated self-esteem, are, in their punishment, supposed to excite ludicrous, not sympathetic emotion; but there is an *excess* of feeling, produced by whatever cause it may be, into which we are, in despite of ourselves, forced to enter. Even fear, the most contemptible of the passions, becomes tragic directly it becomes an agony.

"Well, well!" said Warner at last, speaking very slowly, "it is over—it was a pleasant dream—but it is over—I ought to be thankful for the lesson." Then suddenly changing his mood and tone, he repeated, "Thankful! for

what? that I am a wretch—a wretch more utterly hopeless, and miserable, and abandoned, than a man who freights with all his wealth, his children, his wife, the hoarded treasures and blessings of an existence, one ship, one little, frail, worthless ship, and, standing himself on the shore, sees it suddenly go down! Oh, was I not a fool—a right noble fool—a vain fool—an arrogant fool—a very essence and concentration of all things that make a fool, to believe such delicious marvels of myself! What, man!—(here his eye saw in the opposite glass his features, livid and haggard with disease, and the exhausting feelings which preyed within him)—what, man! would nothing serve thee but to be a genius—*thee*, whom Nature stamped with her curse! Dwarf-like and distorted, mean in stature and in lineament, thou wert, indeed, a glorious being to perpetuate grace and beauty, the majesties and dreams of art! Fame for thee,

indeed—ha—ha! Glory—ha—ha! a place with Titian, Corregio, Raphael—ha—ha—ha! O, thrice modest, thrice reasonable fool! But this vile daub; this disfigurement of canvass; this loathed and wretched monument of disgrace; this notable candidate for—ha—ha—immortality!—this I have, at least, in my power." And seizing the picture, he dashed it to the ground, and trampled it with his feet upon the dusty boards, till the moist colours presented nothing but one confused and dingy stain.

This sight seemed to recal him for a moment. He paused, lifted up the picture once more, and placed it on the table. "But," he muttered, "might not this critic be envious? am I sure that he judged rightly—fairly? The greatest masters have looked askant and jealous at their pupils' works. And then, how slow, how cold, how damned cold, how indifferently

he spoke; why, the very art should have warmed him more. Could he have —— No, no, no: it *was* true, it was! I felt the conviction thrill through me like a barb—a barb of searing iron. Burn it—did he say—ay—burn it—it shall be done this instant."

And hastening to the door, he undid the bolt. He staggered back as he beheld his old and nearest surviving relative, the mother of his father, seated upon the ground beside the door, and listening with terror to the broken exclamations of the solitude she durst not interrupt. She rose slowly, and with difficulty, as she saw him; and throwing around him the withered arms which had nursed his infancy, exclaimed, "My child! my poor—poor child! what has come to you of late? you, who were so gentle, so mild, so quiet—you are no longer the same—and, oh, my son, how ill you look: your father looked so just before he died!"

"Ill!" said he, with a sort of fearful gaiety, "Ill—no—I never was so well—I have been in a dream till now—but I have woke at last. Why, it is true that I have been silent and shy, but I will be so no more. I will laugh, and talk, and walk, and make love, and drink wine, and be all that other men are. Oh, we will be so merry. But stay here, while I fetch a light."

"A light, my child, for what?"

"For a funeral!" shouted Warner, and rushing past her, he descended the stairs, and returned almost in an instant with a light.

Alarmed and terrified, the poor old woman had remained motionless, and weeping violently. Her tears Warner did not seem to notice; he pushed her gently into the room, and began deliberately, and without uttering a syllable, to cut the picture into shreds.

"What are you about, my child?" cried the

old woman; "you are mad, it is your beautiful picture that you are destroying!"

Warner did not reply, but going to the hearth, piled together, with nice and scrupulous care, several pieces of paper, and stick, and matches, into a sort of pyre; then placing the shreds of the picture upon it, he applied the light, and the whole was instantly in a blaze.

"Look, look!" cried he, in an hysterical tone, "how it burns, and crackles, and blazes! What master ever equalled it now?—no fault now in those colours—no false tints in that light and shade! See how that flame darts up and soars! —that flame is my spirit! Look—is it not restless? —does it not aspire bravely?—why, all its brother flames are grovellers to it!—and now—why don't you look!—it falters—fades—droops—and—ha—ha—ha!—poor idler, the fuel is consumed—and—it is darkness!"

As Warner uttered these words, his eyes

reeled; the room swam before him; the excitement of his feeble frame had reached its highest pitch; the disease of many weeks had attained its crisis; and tottering back a few paces, he fell upon the floor, the victim of a delirious and raging fever.

But it was not thus that the young artist was to die. He was reserved for a death, that, like his real nature, had in it more of gentleness and poesy. He recovered by slow degrees, and his mind, almost in despite of himself, returned to that profession from which it was impossible to divert the thoughts and musings of many years. Not that he resumed the pencil and the easil: on the contrary, he could not endure them in his sight: they appeared to a mind festered and sore, like a memorial and monument of shame. But he nursed within him a strong and ardent desire to become a pilgrim to that

beautiful land of which he had so often dreamt, and which the innocent destroyer of his peace had pointed out as the theatre of inspiration, and the nursery of future fame.

The physicians who at Talbot's instigation attended him, looked at his hectic cheek and consumptive frame, and readily flattered his desire; and Talbot, no less interested in Warner's behalf on his own account, than bound by his promise to Clarence, generously extended to the Artist that bounty which is the most precious prerogative of the rich. Notwithstanding her extreme age, his grandmother insisted upon attending him: there is in the heart of woman so deep a well of love, that no age can freeze it. They made the voyage: they reached the shore of the myrtle and the vine, and entered the imperial city. The air of Rome seemed at first to operate favourably upon the health of

the English Artist. His strength appeared to increase, his spirit to expand; and though he had relapsed into more than his original silence and reserve, he resumed, with apparent energy the labours of the easil. Those who looked no deeper than the surface, might have imagined the scar healed, and the real foundation of future excellence began.

But while Warner most humbled himself before the gods of the pictured world; while the true principles of the mighty art opened in their fullest glory on his soul; precisely at that very moment, shame and despondency were most bitter at his heart; and while the enthusiasm of the painter kindled, the ambition of the man despaired. But still he went on, transfusing into his canvass the grandeur and simplicity of the Roman school; still, though he felt palpably within him the creeping advance

of the deadliest and surest enemy to fame, he pursued, with an unwearied ardour, the mechanical completion of his task; still, the morning found him bending before the easil, and the night brought to his solitary couch, meditation, rather than sleep. The fire, the irritability which he had evinced before his illness, had vanished, and the original sweetness of his temper had returned; he uttered no complaint, he dwelt upon no anticipation of success, hope and regret seemed equally dead within him; and it was only when he caught the fond, glad eyes of his aged attendant, that his own filled with tears, or that the serenity of his brow darkened into sadness.

This went on for some months: till one evening they found the painter by his window, seated opposite to an unfinished picture, the pencil was still in his hand: the quiet of settled

thought was still upon his countenance; the soft breeze of a southern twilight waved the hair livingly from his forehead—the earliest star of a southern sky lent to his cheek something of that subdued lustre which, when enthusiasm touched it, it had been accustomed to wear, but these were only the mockeries of life: life itself was no more! In the divine land which he had so yearned to tread—in the consecrated city where the majesty of his sublime art reigned as on a throne—in the purple air in which poesy and inspiration mingled with the common breath and atmosphere of life—his restless and unworldly spirit sighed itself away; and the heart, which in silence and concealment had been long breaking, broke at last!

There are two tombs close to each other in the stranger's burial-place at Rome: they cover those for whom life, unequally long, terminated in the same month. The one is of a woman,

bowed with the burthen of many years; the other darkens over the humble dust of the Ambitious Artist.

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